

THE
WORKS
OF THE
AUTHOR
OF THE
NIGHT-THOUGHTS.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

REVISED and CORRECTED by Himself.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

Printed for D. BROWNE, C. HITCH and L. HAWES, J. HODGES,
H. LINTOT, A. MILLAR, J. and R. TONSON,
J. RIVINGTON, C. CORBET, J. RIVINGTON
and J. FLETCHER, J. JACKSON,
and R. and J. DODSLEY.

M DCC LVII.

1607/4523

THE

WORKS

OF THE

AUTHOR

OF THE

NIGHT-THOUGHTS

IN FOUR VOLUMES

Revised and Corrected by Himself

JOHN H. H. H.



LONDON:

Printed by G. Smith, at the British Museum, in the Strand.

By order of the Trustees, J. Smith, Esq.

Printed by G. Smith, at the British Museum, in the Strand.

By order of the Trustees, J. Smith, Esq.

Printed by G. Smith, at the British Museum, in the Strand.

By order of the Trustees, J. Smith, Esq.

B U S I R I S,
K I N G of E G Y P T.

A
T R A G E D Y.

ACTED at the
THEATRE-ROYAL in DRURY-LANE,
1719.

*O triste planè acerbumque funus ! O morte ipsâ mortis tem-
pus indignius ! Jam destinata erat egregio juveni, jam
electus nuptiarum dies ; quod gaudium, quo mœrore muta-
tum est ?*

PLIN. Epist.

B U S I R I S

KING OF EGYPT

T R A G E D Y

BY THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF LYONS

THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF LYONS
HAS THE HONOUR TO ANNOUNCE
THAT THE TRAGEDY OF
BUSIRIS



PROLOGUE,

By a FRIEND.

Spoken by Mr. BOOTH.

*L*ONG have you seen the Greek and Roman name,
Assisted by the muse, renew their fame,
While yet unsung those heroes sleep, from whom
Greece form'd her Plato's, and her Cæsar's Rome.

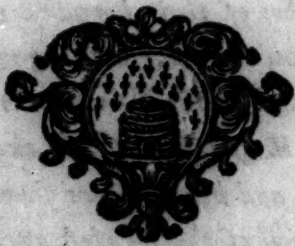
Such, Egypt, were thy sons! divinely great
In arts, and arms, in wisdom, and in state.
Her early monarchs gave such glories birth,
Their ruins are the wonders of the earth.
Structures so vast by those great kings design'd,
Are but faint sketches of their boundless mind:
Yet ne'er has Albion's Scene, tho' long renown'd,
With the stern tyrants of the Nile been crown'd.

The tragic muse in grandeur shou'd excel,
Her figure blazes, and her numbers swell.
The proudest monarch of the proudest age,
From Egypt comes to tread the British stage:
Old Homer's heroes, moderns are to those
Whom this night's venerable scenes disclose.

PROLOGUE.

*Here pomp and splendor serve but to prepare ;
To touch the soul is our peculiar care ;
By just distress soft pity to impart,
And mend your nature, while we move your heart ;
Nor wou'd these scenes in empty words abound,
Or overlay the sentiment with sound.
When passion rages, eloquence is mean ;
Gestures and looks best speak the moving scene.*

*Ye shining Fair ! when tender woes invite
To pleasing anguish and severe delight,
By your affliction you compute your gain,
And rise in pleasure as you rise in pain.
If then just objects of concern are shown,
And your hearts heave with sorrows not your own,
Let not the gen'rous impulse be withstood,
Strive not with nature ; blush not to be good :
Sighs only from a noble temper rise,
And 'tis your virtue swells into your Eyes.*



Dramatis

SCENE: Temple of Minerva, N. O. 1790



Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

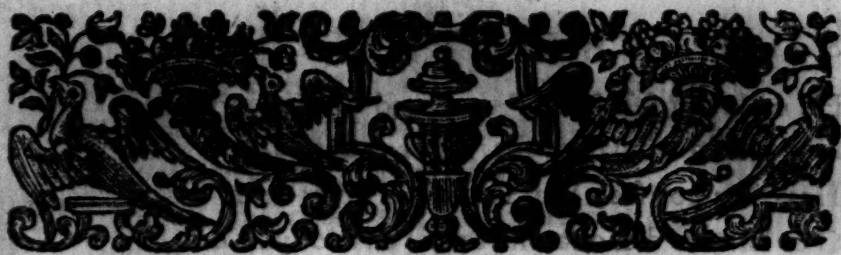
BUSIRIS, King of <i>Egypt</i> ,		Mr. ELRINGTON.
MYRON, the Prince,		Mr. BOOTH.
NICANOR, Father of <i>Mandane</i> ,		Mr. MILLS.
MEMNON,	} Conspirators,	Mr. WILKS.
RAMESES,		Mr. WALKER.
SYPHOCES,		Mr. THURMOND.
PERON,		Mr. WILLIAMS.
AULETES, a Courtier,		Mr. W. MILLS.

W O M E N.

MYRIS, Queen of <i>Egypt</i> ,	Mrs. THURMOND.
MANDANE,	Mrs. OLDFIELD.

SCENE, a Temple at MEMPHIS, in *Old Egypt*.

BUSIRIS.



B U S I R I S.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

Enter PHERON and SYPHOCES.

SYPHOCES.

IF glorious structures, and immortal deeds,
Enlarge the thought, and set our souls on fire,
My tongue has been too cold in *Egypt's* praise,
The queen of nations, and the boast of times,
Mother of science, and the house of Gods!
Scarce can I open wide my lab'ring mind
To comprehend the vast idea, big
With arts and arms, so boundless in their fame.

PHERON.

Thrice happy land! did not her dreadful king,
Far-fam'd *Busiris*, whom the world reveres,
Lay all his shining wonders in disgrace,
By cruelty and pride.

SYPHOCES.

By pride indeed;

He calls himself *The Proud*, and glories in it,
 Nor would exchange for *Jupiter's Almighty*.
 Have we not seen him shake his silver reins
 O'er harness'd monarchs to his chariot yok'd?
 In fullen majesty they stalk along,
 With eyes of indignation and despair,
 While he aloft displays his impious state,
 With half their rifled kingdoms o'er his brow,
 Blazing to heav'n in diamonds, and gold.

PERON.

Nor less the tyrant's cruelty than pride;
 His horrid altars stream with human blood,
 And piety is murder in his hands. [*A great shout.*]

SYPHOCES.

There rose the voice of twice two hundred thousand,
 And broke the clouds, and clear'd the face of day;
 The king, who from his temple's airy height,
 With heart dilated, that great work surveys,
 Which shall proclaim what can be done by man,
 Has struck his purple streamer, and descends.

PERON.

Twice ten long years have seen that haughty pile,
 Which nations with united toil advance,
 Gain on the skies, and labour up to heaven.

SYPHOCES.

The king—or prostrate fall, or disappear. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter BUSIRIS, attended.

BUSIRIS.

This antient city, *Memphis* the renown'd,
 Almost coæval with the Sun himself,

And

And boasting strength scarce sooner to decay,
 How wanton sits she amid nature's smiles;
 Nor from her highest turret has to view,
 But golden landscapes and luxuriant scenes;
 A waste of wealth, the storehouse of the world!
 Here, fruitful vales, far stretching, fly the sight;
 There, sails unnumber'd whiten all the stream;
 While from the banks full twenty thousand cities
 Survey their pride, and see their gilded towers
 Float on the waves, and break against the shore:
 To crown the whole, this rising pyramid

[Shows the plan.]

Lengthens in air, and ends among the stars;
 While every other object shrinks beneath
 Its mighty shade, and lessens to the view,
 As kings compar'd with me.

Enter AULETES. He falls prostrate.

AULETES.

O live for ever,

Busiris, first of men!

BUSIRIS.

Auletes, rise.

AULETES.

Embassadors from various climes arrive,
 To view your wonders, and to greet your fame;
 Each loaden with the gifts his country yields,
 Of which the meanest rise to gold and pearl:
 The rich *Arabian* fills his ample vase
 With sacred incense; *Ethiopia* sends
 A thousand coursers fleetier than the wind;

And their black riders darken all the plain;
Camels and elephants from other realms,
Bending beneath a weight of luxury,
Bring the best seasons of their various years,
And leave their monarchs poor.

BUSIRIS.

What from the *Persian*?

AULETES.

He bends before your throne, and far outweighs
The rest in tribute, and outshines in state.

BUSIRIS.

Away; he sees me not; I know his purpose;
A spy upon my greatness, and no friend:
Take his Embassador, and shew him *Egypt*;
In *Memphis* shew him various nations met,
As in a sea, yet not confined in space,
But streaming freely thro' the spacious streets,
Which send forth millions at each brazen gate,
Whene'er the trumpet calls; high over-head
On the broad walls the chariots bound along,
And leave in air a thunder of my own:
Jove too has pour'd the *Nile* into my hand,
The prince of rivers, ocean's eldest son:
Rich of myself, I make the fruitful year,
Nor ask precarious plenty from the sky——
Throw all my glories open to his view,
Then tell him, in return for trifles offer'd,
I give him *this*; and when a *Persian* arm

[*Gives him a bow.*]

Can thus with vigour its reluctance bend,
And to the nerve its stubborn force subdue;

Then

Then let his master think of arms—but bring
 More men than yet e'er pour'd into the field ;
 Mean time, thank heaven, our tide of conquest drives
 A different way, and leaves him still a king :
 This to the *Persian*.—I receive the rest,
 And give the world an answer. [Exit Busris.]

MANDANE, *attended by priests and her virgins, is seen
 sacrificing at a distance.*

An hymn to Isis is sung. The priests go out.

MANDANE, *attended by her maids, advances.*

MANDANE.

My morning duty to the gods is over,
 Yet still this terror hangs upon my soul,
 And saddens every thought—I still behold
 The dreadful image ; still the threat'ning sword
 Points at my breast, and glitters in mine eye.—
 But 'twas a dream ; no more. My virgins, leave me ;
 And thou, great Ruler of the world, be present !
 O kindly shine on this important hour !
 This hour determines all my future life,
 And gives it up to misery or joy. [She advances.]
 These lonely walks, this deep and solemn gloom,
 Where noon-day suns but glimmer to the view,
 This house of tears, and mansion of the dead,
 For ever hides him from the hated light,
 And gives him leave to groan.

*Back scene draws, and shows MEMNON leaning on his
 father's tomb.*

Was ever scene

So mournful ! If, my lord, the dead alone
Are all your care, life is no more a blessing.
How cou'd you shun me for this dismal shade,
And seek from love a refuge in despair ?

MEMNON.

Why hast thou brought those eyes to this sad place,
Where darkness dwells, and grief would sigh secure
In welcome horrors, and beloved night ?
Thy beauties drive thy friendly shades before them,
And light up day e'en here. Retire, my love ;
Each joyful moment I wou'd share with thee,
My virtuous maid, but I wou'd mourn alone.

MANDANE.

What have you found in me so mean, to hope
That while you sigh, my soul can be at peace ?
Your sorrows flow from your *Mandane's* eyes.

MEMNON.

O my *Mandane* !

MANDANE.

Wherefore turn you from me ?
Have I offended, or are you unkind ?——
Ah me ! a sight as strange, as pitiful !
From this big heart, o'ercharg'd with gen'rous sorrow,
See the tide working upward to his eye,
And stealing from him in large silent drops,
Without his leave !—can those tears flow in vain ?

MEMNON.

Why will you double my distress, and make
My grief my crime, by discomposing you ?——
And yet I can't forbear ! Alas, my father !
That name excuses all ; what is not due

To

To that great name, which life or death can pay

MANDANE.

Speak on, and ease your lab'ring breast: It swells
And sinks again; and then it swells so high,
It looks as it wou'd break. I know 'tis big
With something you wou'd utter. Oft in vain
I have presum'd to ask your mournful story;
But ever have been answer'd with a frown.

MEMNON.

O my *Mandane*! did my tale concern
Myself alone, it wou'd not lie conceal'd;
But 'tis wrapt up in guilt, in royal guilt,
And therefore 'tis unsafe to touch upon it:
To tell my tale, is to blow off the ashes
From sleeping embers, which will rise in flames
At the least breath, and spread destruction round.
But thou art faithful, and my other self;
And, O! my heart this moment is so full,
It bursts with its complaints; and I must speak.

Myris, the present queen, was only sister
Of great *Artaxes*, our late royal lord:
Busiris, who now reigns, was first of males
In lineal blood, to which this crown descends.
Not with long circumstance to load my story,
Ambitious *Myris* fir'd his daring soul,
And turn'd his sword against her brother's life:
Then mounting to the tyrant's bed and throne,
Enjoy'd her shame, and triumph'd in her guilt.

MANDANE.

So black a story well might shun the day.

MEMNON.

Artaxes' friends (a virtuous multitude)

Were

Were swept away by banishment or death,
 In throngs, and fated the devouring grave.
 My father—Think, *Mandane*, on your own,
 And pardon me!— [Weeps.
 The tyrant took me, then of tender years,
 And rear'd me with his son (a son since dead).
 He vainly hoped, by shews of guilty kindness,
 To wear away the blackness of his crime,
 And reconcile me to my father's fate;
 Hence have I long been forc'd to stay my vengeance,
 To smoothe my brow with smiles, and curb my tongue,
 While the big woe lies throbbing at my heart.—

Enter PHERON at a distance.

PHERON. [*Afide.*]

So close! so loving!—Here I stand unseen,
 And watch my rival's fate.

MEMNON.

But thou, my fair;
 Thou art my peace in tumult, life in death;
 Thou yet canst make me blest'd.

MANDANE.

As how, my lord?

MEMNON.

Ah! why wilt thou insult me?

MANDANE.

Memnon—

MEMNON.

Speak!

MANDANE.

Nature forbids; and when I would begin,

She

She stifles all my spirits, and I faint :
 My heart is breaking, but I cannot speak.
 O let me fly.——

MEMNON.

You pierce me to the soul. [Holding her.

MANDANE.

O! spare me for a moment, till my heart
 Regains its wonted force, and I will speak——
Pheron, you know, is daily urgent with me,
 Breaks thro' restraints, and will not be refused.

[*Pheron shows a great concern.*

Yet more : The prince, the young impetuous prince,
 Before his father sent him forth to war,
 And gave the *Mede* to his destructive sword,
 Has often taught his tongue a filken tale,
 Descended from himself, and talk'd of love.
 Since last I saw thee, his licentious passion
 Has haunted all my dreams——
 This day the court shines forth in all its lustre,
 To welcome her returning warrior home ;
 Alas, the malice of our stars!

MEMNON.

To place it

Beyond the power of fate to part our loves ;
 Be this our bridal night, my life !—my soul ! [Embrace.

PERON.

Perdition seize them both ! and have I lov'd
 So long, to catch her in another's arms !
 Another's arms for ever ! O the pang !
 Heart-piercing sight !—but rage shall take its turn——
 It shall be so—and let the crime be his

Who

Who drives me to the black extremity ;
I fear no farther hell than that I feel. [Exit.

MEMNON.

Trembling I grasp thee, and my anxious heart
Is still in doubt if I may call thee mine.
O blifs too great ! O painful ecstafy !
I know not what to utter.

MANDANE.

Ah, my lord !

What means this damp that comes athwart my joy,
Chastifing thus the lightnefs of my heart ?——

I have a father, and a father too,
Tender as nature ever fram'd. His will
Should be confulted. Should I touch his peace,
I fhould be wretched in my *Memnon's* arms.

MEMNON.

Talk not of wretchednefs.

MANDANE.

Alas ! this day

First gave me birth, and (which is ftrange to tell)
The fates e'er fince, as watching its return,
Have caught it as it flew, and mark'd it deep
With fomething great ; extremes of good or ill.

MEMNON.

Why fhould we bode misfortune to our loves ?
No ; I receive thee from the gods, in lieu
Of all that happinefs they ravish'd from me ;
Fame, freedom, father, all return in thee.
Had not the gods *Mandane* to beftow,
They never would have pour'd fuch vengeance on me ;
They meant me thee, and could not be fevere.

Soon

Soon as night's favourable shades descend,
The holy priest shall join our hands for ever,
And life shall prove but one long bridal-day.
Till then, in scenes of pleasure lose thy grief,
Or strike the lute, or smile among the flowers,
They'll sweeter smell, and fairer bloom for thee.—
Alas ! I'm torn from this dear tender side,
By weighty reasons, and important calls ;
Nay, e'en by love itself—I quit thee now,
But to deserve thee more. *[They embrace.]*

MANDANE.

Your friends are here. *[Exit Mand.]*

MEMNON.

Excellent creature ! how my soul pants for thee !
But other passions now begin their claim ;
Doubt, and disdain, and sorrow, and revenge,
With mingling tumult, tear up all my breast :
O how unlike the softnesses of love !

Enter SYPHOCES.

SYPHOCES.

Hail, worthy *Memnon*.

MEMNON.

Welcome, my *Syphoces*.

And much I hope thou bring'st a bleeding heart ;
A heart that bleeds for others miseries,
Bravely regardless of its own, tho' great ;
That first of characters.

SYPHOCES.

And there's a second,
Not far behind ; To rescue the distress'd,
Or die, MEM.

MEMNON.

Yes, die ; and visit those brave men,
 Who, from the first of time, have bath'd their hands
 In tyrants blood, and grasp'd their honest swords
 As part of their own being, when the cause,
 The public cause, demanded. O, my friend !
 How long shall *Egypt* groan in chains ? How long
 Shall her sons fall in heaps without a foe ?
 No war, plague, famine, nothing but *Busiris*,
 His people's father ! and the state's defence !
 Yet but a remnant of the land survives.

SYPHOCES.

What havock have I seen ? Have we not known
 A multitude become a morning's prey,
 When troubled rest, or a debauch, has sour'd
 The monster's temper ? Then 'tis instant death ;
 Then fall the brave and good, like ripen'd corn
 Before the sweeping scythe ; not the poor mercy
 To starve, and pine at leisure in their chains.——
 But what fresh hope, that we receive your summons
 To meet you here this morning ?

MEMNON.

Know, *Syphoces*,

'Twas on this day my warlike father's blood,
 So often lavish'd in his country's cause,
 And greatly sold for conquest and renown ;
 'Twas on this execrable day, it flow'd
 On his own pavement, in a peaceful hour,
 Smok'd in the dust, and wash'd a ruffian's feet.
 This guilty day returning, rouses all
 My smother'd rage, and blows it to a flame.

Where

Where are our friends?

SYPHOCES.

At hand. *Rameses,*

Last night, when gentle rest o'er nature spread
Her still command, and care alone was waking,
Like a dumb, lonely, discontented, ghost,
Enter'd my chamber, and approach'd my bed:
With bursts of passion, and a peal of groans,
He recollects his god-like brother's fate,
The drunken banquet, and the midnight murder,
And urges vengeance on the guilty prince.
Such was the fellness of his boiling rage,
Methought the night grew darker as he frown'd.

MEMNON.

I know he bears the prince most deadly hate;
But this will enter deeper in his soul; [*Shews a letter.*
And rouse up passions, which till now have slept:
Murder will look like innocence to this.

SYPHOCES.

How, *Memnon*?

MEMNON.

This reminds me of thy fate;
The queen has courted thee with proffer'd realms,
And sought by threats to bend thee to her will;
She languishes, she burns, she wastes away
In fruitless hopes, and dies upon thy name.

SYPHOCES.

O fatal love! which stung by jealousy,
Expell'd a life far dearer than mine own,
By curst poison—Ah divine *Apame*!
And cou'd the murd'ress hope she shou'd inherit

This

This heart, and fill thy place within these arms?—
But grief shall yield—Revenge, I'm wholly thine!

MEMNON.

The tyrant too is wanton in his age,
He shews that all his thoughts are not in blood;
Love claims its share; he envies poor *Rameses*
The softness of his bed; and thinks *Amelia*
A mistress worthy of a monarch's arms.

SYPHOCES.

But see, *Rameses* comes; a fullen gloom
Scowls on his brow, and marks him thro' the dusk.

Enter RAMESES, PHERON, and other conspirators.

MEMNON.

To what, my friend, shall *Memnon* bid you welcome?
To tombs, and melancholy scenes of death?
I have no costly banquets, such as spread
Prince *Myron's* table, when your brother fell.

[To *Rameses*.

I have no gilded roof, no gay apartment,
Such as the queen prepar'd for thee, *Syphoces*.
Yet be not discontent, my valiant friends,
Busiris reigns, and 'tis not out of season
To look on aught may mind us of our fate:
His sword is ever drawn, and furious *Myris*
Thinks the day lost that is not mark'd with blood.

RAMESES.

And have we felt a tyrant twenty years,
Felt him as the raw wound the burning steel;
And are we murmuring out our midnight curses,
Drying our tears in corners, and complaining?

Our

Our hands are forfeited.—Gods! strike them off.
 No hands we need to fasten our own chains,
 Our masters will do that; and we want souls
 To raise them to an use more worthy men.

MEMNON.

Ruffles your temper at offences past?
 Here then, to sting thee into madness.

[*Gives the letter.* Rameſes reads.]

RAMESES.

Oh!

SYPHOCES.

See how the struggling paſſions ſhake his frame!

RAMESES.

My boſom joy, that crowns my happy bed
 With tender pledges of our mutual love,
 Far dearer than my ſoul! and ſhall my wife,
 The mother of my little innocents,
 Be taken from us! Torn from me, from mine,
 Who live but on her ſight! And ſhall I hear
 Her cries for ſuccour, and not ruſh upon him?
 My infant hanging at the neck upbraids me,
 And ſtruggles with his little arms to ſave her.—
 Theſe veins have ſtill ſome gen'rous blood in ſtore,
 The dregs of thoſe rich ſtreams his wars have drain'd;
 I'll giv't in dowry with her.

PHERON.

Well reſolv'd:

A tardy vengeance ſhares the tyrant's guilt.

RAMESES.

Let me embrace thee, *Pheron*, thou art brave,
 And doſt diſdain the coldneſs of delay.

Curſe

Curse on the man that calls *Rameses* friend,
 And keeps his temper at a tale like this ;
 When rage and rancour are the proper virtues,
 And loss of reason is the mark of men.

MEMNON.

Thus I've determin'd : When the midnight hour
 Lulls this proud city, and her monarch dreams
 Of humbled foes, or his new mistress' love,
 Then we will rush at once, let loose the terrors
 Of rage pent in, and struggling twenty years
 To find a vent, and at one dreadful blow
 Begin and end the war.

A more auspicious juncture could not happen.
 The *Persian*, who for years has join'd our counsels,
 Stirr'd up the love of freedom, and in private
 Long nurs'd that glorious appetite with gold,
 This morn with transport snatch'd the wish'd occasion
 Of throwing his resentment wide, and now
 He frowns in arms, and gives th' event to fate.

RAMESES.

This hand shall drag the tyrant from the throne,
 And stab the royal victim on this altar.

[*Pointing to the tomb.*]

MEMNON.

O justly thought ! Friends, cast your eyes around ;
 All that most awful is, or great in nature,
 This solemn scene presents ; the gods are here,
 And here our fam'd forefathers sacred tombs ;
 Who never brook'd a tyrant in this land.
 Let us not act beneath the grand assembly !
 The slighted altars tremble, and these tombs

Send

Send forth a peal of groans to urge us on.
Come then, surround my father's monument,
And call his shade to witness to your vows.

RAMESES.

Nor his alone. O all ye mighty dead!
Illustrious shades! who nightly stalk around
The tyrant's couch, and shake his guilty soul;
Whether already you converse with Gods,
Or stray below in melancholy glooms,
From earth, from air, from heav'n, and even hell,
Come, I conjure you, by the pris'ner's chain,
The widow's sighing, and the orphan's tears,
The virgin's shrieks, the hero's spouting veins,
By gods blasphem'd, and free-born men enslaved.

MEMNON.

Hear, *Jove*, and you most injured heroes, hear,
While we o'er this thrice-hallow'd monument
Thus join our hands, and kneeling to the gods,
Fast bind our souls to great revenge!

ALL.

We swear——

MEMNON.

This night the tyrant and his minions bleed.

PERON. [*Aside.*]

So, now my foe is taken in the toil,
And I've a second cast for this proud maid——
It is an oath well spent, a perjury
Of good account in vengeance, and in love.

MEMNON.

We wrong the mighty dead, if we permit
Our eyes alone to count this grand assembly:

A thousand unseen heroes walk among us ;
 My father rises from his tomb ; his wounds
 Bleed all afresh, and consecrate the day :
 He waves his arm, and chides our tardy vengeance ;
 More than this world shall thank us. O my friends !
 Such our condition, we have nought to lose ;
 And great may be our gain, if this be great,
 To crush a Tyrant, and preserve a State ;
 To still the clamours of our father's blood,
 To fix the basis of the Public good,
 To leave a fame eternal ; then to soar,
 Mix with the gods, and bid the world adore.



ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE, *The Palace.*

*A magnificent throne discover'd, and several courtiers
 walking to and fro.*

Enter SYPHOCES and RAMESES. Shouts at a distance.

RAMESES.

WHAT means this dust and tumult in the court,
 These streamers fooling in the wind, these shouts,
 The tyrant blazing in full insolence,
 And all his gaudy courtiers basking round him,
 Like pois'nous vermin in a dog-day sun ?

SYPHOCES.

Your father and prince *Myron* are arriv'd,

And with one peal of joy the nation rings.

RAMESES.

Long has my father serv'd this tyrant king,

With zeal well worthy of a better cause.

Tho' with his helm he hides a hoary brow,

Long vers'd in death, the father of the field,

At the shrill trumpet he throws off the weight

Of fourscore years, and springs upon the foe.

The transport danger gives him, conquers nature,

And a short youth boils up within his veins.

SYPHOCES.

Behold this way they pass to meet the king.

MYRON and NICANOR pass the stage with attendants.

RAMESES. [*Looking on Myron.*]

What pity 'tis that one so lost in guilt,

Should thus engage the fight with manly charms,

And make vice lovely!

SYPHOCES.

Pardon me, *Rameses*:

'Tho' to my *foe*, I must be ever just.

He's gen'rous, grateful, affable, and brave:

But then he knows no limit to his passion;

The tempest-beaten bark is not so toss'd

As is his reason, when those winds arise:

And tho' he draws a fatal sword in battle,

And kindles in the warm pursuit of fame,

Pleasure subdues him quite; the sparkling eye,

And gen'rous bowl, bear down his graver mind,

While fiery spirits dance along his veins,

And keep a constant revel in his heart.

RAMESES.

But here the tyrant comes!—With what excess
Of idle pride will he receive his son!
How with big words will he swell out this conquest,
And into grandeur puff his little tales!

*Enter KING, and ascends the throne; on the other side,
Enter MYRON and NICANOR.*

KING.

Welcome, my son; great partner of my fame;
I thank thee for th' increase of my dominions,
That now more mountains rise, more rivers flow,
And more stars shine in my still growing empire.
The sun himself surveys it not at once,
But travels for the view, whilst far disjoin'd,
My subjects live unheard-of by each other;
These wrapp'd in shades, while those enjoy the light;
Their day is various, but their king the same.

MYRON.

Here, Sir, your thanks are due; to this old arm,
Whose nerves not threescore winter camps unbend,
You owe your victory, and I my life.
When my fierce courser with a javelin stung,
First rear'd in air, then tearing with a bound
The trembling earth, plung'd deep amidst the foe;
And now a thousand deaths from ev'ry side,
Had but one mark, and on my buckler rung;
Through the throng'd legions, like a tempest, rush'd
This friend, o'er gasping heroes, rolling steeds,
And snatch'd me from my fate.

BUSIRIS.

I thank thee, general;
Thou

Thou hast a heart that swells with loyalty;
And throws off the infection of these times;
But thy degenerate boy——

NICANOR.

No more my son;
I cut him off; my guilt, my punishment.
Look not, dread Sir, on me through his offence;
O let not that discolour all my service,
And ruin those who blame him for his crimes!

BUSIRIS.

Old man, I will not wear the crown in vain;
Subjects shall work my will, or feel my pow'r;
Their disobedience shall not be my guilt.
Who is their welfare, glory, and defence?
The land that yields them food, and ev'ry stream
That flakes their thirst, the air they breathe, is mine.
And is concurrence to their own enjoyment
By due submission, a too great return?
Death and destruction are within my call——
But thou shalt flourish in thy master's smile.
A faithful minister adorns my crown,
And throws a brighter glory round my brow.

NICANOR.

Take but one more, one small one, to your favour,
And then my soul's at peace—I have a daughter,
An only daughter, now an only child,
Since her lost brother's folly; she deserves
The most a father can for so much goodness:
Her mother's dead, and we are left alone;
We two are the whole house; nor are we two,
In her I live, the comfort of my age;

And if the king extend his grace so far,
 And take that tender blossom into shelter,
 Then I have all my monarch can bestow,
 Or heav'n itself; but this, that I may wear
 My life's poor remnant out in your command;
 Stretch forth my being to the last in duty,
 And, when the fates shall summon, die for you.

BUSIRIS.

Nicanor, know, thy daughter is our care.

MYRON.

O, Sir, be greatly kind, exert your pow'r,
 And with the monarch, furnish out the friend!——
 Art thou not he, that gallant-minded chief, [*To Nic.*
 Who wou'd not stoop to give me less than life?
 And shall I prove ungrateful? Shocking thought!
 He that's ungrateful, has no guilt but one;
 All other crimes may pass for virtues in him,

NICANOR.

What joy my daughter's promis'd welfare gives me,
 My lips I need not open to discover——
 Thus humbly let me thank you.

BUSIRIS.

Dry thy tears,
 And follow us; thy daughter's near our queen,
 And longs, no doubt, to see thee: Bless the maid,
 And then attend us on affairs of state.——
 I hear, there's treason near us: Though the slaves
 Fall off from their obedience, and deny
 That I'm their monarch, I'm *Busiris* still:
 Collected in myself, I'll stand alone,
 And hurl my thunder, tho' I shake my throne:

Like

Like death, a solitary king I'll reign
 O'er silent subjects, and a desert plain;
 Ere brook their pride, I'll spread a gen'ral doom,
 And ev'ry step shall be from tomb to tomb. [Exit,

[Myr. and Aul. who talk'd aside, advance.

MYRON.

Her absent beauties glow'd upon my mind,
 And sparkled in each thought. She never left me—
 Wou'dst thou believe it? In the field of battle,
 In the mid terror, and the flame of fight,
Mandane, thou hast stol'n away my soul,
 And left my fame in danger.—My rais'd arm
 Has hung in air, forgetful to descend,
 And, for a moment, spar'd the prostrate foe——
 O that her birth rose equal to my own!
 Then I might wed with honour, and enjoy
 A lawful bliss——And why not now? Methinks
 Absence has plac'd her in a fairer light,
 Enrich'd the maid, and heighten'd ev'ry charm.

AULETES.

She comes!

MYRON.

That modest grace subdu'd my soul:
 That chastity of look, which seems to hang
 A veil of purest light o'er all her beauties,
 And by forbidding, most inflames, desire.

[Enter MANDANE.

What tender force! what dignity divine!
 What virtue consecrating ev'ry feature!
 Around that neck, what drops are gold and pearl!
Mandane! powerful being, whose first sight

Gives me a transport not to be express'd ;
 And with one moment over-pays a year
 Of danger, toil, and death, and absence from thee.

MANDANE.

My lord, I fought my father.

MYRON.

Leave me not ;

I've much to say ; much more than you conceive ;
 Yes, by the gods, much more than I can utter :
 My breath is snatch'd ; I tremble ; I expire. [*Aside.*
 Nay, here I'll offer tender violence—— [*Takes her hand.*
 May I not breathe my soul upon this hand ?
 When your eyes triumph, and insult my pain,
 Permit me here to take a small revenge.

MANDANE.

My lord, I am not conscious of my fault.

MYRON.

'Tis false——I know the language of those eyes ;
 They use me ill——See my heart beat, *Mandane* ;
 Believe not me, but tell yourself my passion——
 Is it in art to counterfeit within ?
 To drive the spirits, and inflame the blood ?
 Each nerve is pierc'd with light'ning from your eye,
 And every pulse is in the throbs of love.

MANDANE.

My lord, my duty calls ; I must not stay.

MYRON.

Give me a moment : I have that to speak
 Will burst me, if suppress——O heavenly maid !
 Thy charms are doubled,——so is thy disdain——
 Who is it ; tell me, who enjoys thy smile ?

There

There is a happy man, I swear there is;
 I know it by your coldness to your friend——
 That thought has fix'd a scorpion on my heart,
 That stings to death——And is it possible
 You ever spoke of *Myron* in his absence,
 Or cast at leisure a light thought that way ?

MANDANE.

I thought of you, my lord, and of my father,
 And pray'd for your success ; nor must I now
 Neglect to give him joy.

MYRON.

Yet stay ; you shall not go——Ungrateful woman ?
 I wou'd not wrong your father ; but, by heav'n,
 His love is hatred, if compar'd with mine.
 I understand whence this unkindness flows ;
 Your heart repents some licence of my youth,
 When love had touch'd my brain. You may forgive me
 Because I never shall forgive myself ;
 But that you live, I'd rush upon my sword.
 If you forgive me, I shall now approach,
 Not as a lover only, but a wretch
 Redeem'd from baseness to the ways of honour,
 And to my passion join my gratitude :
 Each time I kneel before you, I shall rise
 As well a better, as a happier, Man,
 Indebted to your virtue, and your love.

MANDANE.

I must not hear you.

MYRON.

O torment me not !

Hear me you must, and more—Your father's valour,

In the late battle, rescu'd me from death :
 And how shall I be grateful ! Thou'rt a princess ;——
 Think not, *Mandane*, this a sudden start ;
 A flash of love, that kindles and expires :
 Long have I weigh'd it ; since I parted hence,
 No night has pass'd, but this has broke my rest,
 And mix'd with ev'ry dream. My fair, I wed thee
 In the maturest counsel of my soul.

MANDANE. [*Aside.*]
 O gods ! I tremble at the rising storm ;
 Where can this end ?

MYRON.
 And do you then despise me ?

MANDANE.
 My lord, I want the courage to accept
 What far transcends my merit, and for ever
 Must silently upbraid my little worth.

MYRON.
 Have I forsook myself, forgone my temper
 Headlong to all the gay delights of youth,
 And fall'n in love with virtue most severe ;
 Turn'd superstitious, to make thee my friend ?
 Gods ! have I struggled thro' the pow'rful reasons
 That strongly combated my fond resolves ?
 Was wealth o'erlook'd, and glory of no weight ;
 My parent's crown forgot, and my own conquests ;
 And all to be refus'd, to sooth your pride,
 And make my rival sport ?

MANDANE. [*Kneels.*]
 With patience hear me——
 Nor let my trust in *Myron* prove my ruin.

My-

MYRON.
Distraction ! Art thou marry'd ?

MANDANE.
Oh !

MYRON.
My heart foretold it.—Ah my soul ! *Auletes.* [*Swoons.*]

AULETES.
Madam, 'tis prudent in you to withdraw— [*Exit Mand.*]

MYRON.
I do not live—I cannot bear the light !
Where is *Mandane* ? But I would not know.
She is not mine.—Yet, though not mine in love,
Revenge, my just revenge, may overtake her.
O how I hate her ! Let me know her faults :
Did the proud maid insult me in distress,
And smile to see me gasping ? Speak, *Auletes.*
Did she not sigh ? Sure she might pity me,
Though all her love is now another's right.

AULETES.
She sigh'd, and wept ; but I remov'd her from you.

MYRON.
It was well done—Yet I cou'd gaze for ever.
And *did* she sigh ? And *did* she drop a tear ?
The tears she shed for me are surely mine ;
And shall another dry them on those cheeks,
And make them an excuse for greater fondness ?
Shall I assist the villain in his joys ?
No ; I will tear her from him——
I'd grudge her beauties to the gods that gave them.

AULETES.
My lord, have temper.

MYRON.
And another's passion

Warm on that lip ! another's burning arms
 Strain'd round the lovely waist for which I die,
 And she consenting, wooing, growing to him !
 What golden scenes, when absent, did I feign !
 What lovely pictures did I draw in air !
 What luxury of thought ! And see my fate !
 Shall then my slave enjoy her ; and I languish
 In my triumphal car, my foot on purple,
 And o'er my head a canopy of gold,
 Fate in my nod, and monarchs in my train !
 What if I stab him ? No—She will not wed
 His murderer—I never form'd a wish,
 But full fruition taught me to forget it.
 And am I lessen'd by my late success ?
 And have I lost my conquest ? Fly, *Auletes*,
 And tell her——

AULETES.

What, my lord ?

MYRON.

No, bid her——

AULETES.

Speak !

MYRON.

I know not what—My heart is torn asunder.

AULETES.

Retire, my lord, and recompose yourself :

The queen approaches—Ha ! her bosom swells ;

[Exit Myron.

Her pale lip trembles ; a disorder'd haste
 Is in her steps ; her eyes shoot gloomy fires—
 When *Myris* is in anger, happy they
 She calls her friends.

Enter

Enter QUEEN.

QUEEN.

Auletes, where's the king?

AULETES.

At council, madam.

QUEEN.

Let him know I want him. [*Exit Aul.*

Base! to forget to whom he owes a crown!

Fool! to provoke *her* rage whose hand is red

In her own brother's blood!

Enter KING and PHERON.

KING.

Horrid conspiracy!

PERON.

This night was destin'd for the bloody deed.

KING.

Mistaken villains! if they with my death,

They should in prudence lay their weapons by:

So jealous are the gods of *Egypt's* glory,

I cannot die whilst slaves are arm'd against me.

Haste, *Pheron*, to the dungeon; plunge them down

Far from the hopes of day; there let them lie

Banish'd this world while yet alive, and groan

In darkness, and in horror—Let double chains

Consume the flesh of *Memnon's* loaded limbs,

'Till death shall knock them off—A king's thy friend:

Nay, more; *Busiris*.—Go; let that suffice—

[*Exit Pheron*]

QUEEN.

My lord, your thought's engag'd.

KING.

Affairs of state

Detain'd me from my queen.

QUEEN.

The world may wait :

I've a request, my lord.

KING.

Oblige me with it.

QUEEN.

Will you comply ?

KING.

My queen, my pow'r is yours.

QUEEN.

Your queen ?

KING.

My queen.

QUEEN.

Indeed, it should be so—

Then sign these orders for *Amelia's* death.—

He starts, turns pale, he's sinking into earth.—

Enough ; be gone, and fling thee at her feet ;

Doat on my slave, and sue to her for mercy.

Go ; pour forth all the folly of thy soul ;

But bear in mind, thou giv'st not of thy own :

Thou giv'st that kindness, which I bought with blood,

Nor shall I lose unmov'd.

KING.

I wish, my queen,

This still had slept a secret for thy sake ;

But since thy restless jealousy of soul

Has been so studious of its own disquiet,

Support it as you may—I own I've felt

Amelia's charms, and think them worth my love.

QUEEN:

QUEEN.

And dar'st thou bravely own it too? O insult!
 Forgetful man! 'tis I then owe a crown!
 Thou hadst still grovelling in the lower world,
 And view'd a throne at distance, had not I
 Told thee thou wast a man, and (dreadful thought!)
 Thro' my own brother cut thy way to empire:
 But thou might'st well forget a crown bestow'd;
 That gift was small: I listen'd to thy sighs,
 And rais'd thee to my bed.

KING.

I thank you for it:
 The gifts you made me were not cast away:
 I understand their worth: Husband and King
 Are names of no mean import; they rise high
 Into dominion, and are big with pow'r——
 Whate'er I was, I now am king of *Egypt*,
 And *Myris*' lord.

QUEEN.

I dream: Art thou *Busiris*?
Busiris, that has trembled at my feet?
 And art thou now my Jove, with clouded brow
 Dispensing fate, and looking down on *Myris*?
 Dost thou derive thy spirit from thy crimes?
 'Cause thou hast wrong'd me, therefore dost thou threaten,
 And roll thine eye in anger? Rather bend,
 And sue for pardon!—O detestable!
 Burn for a stranger's bed!——

KING.

And what was mine,
 When *Myris* first vouchsaf'd to smile on me?

QUEEN.

QUEEN.

Distraction! death! upbraided for my love!—
 Thou art not only criminal, but base:
 Mine was a godlike guilt: Ambition in it;
 Its foot in hell, its head above the clouds;
 For know, I hated when I most caress'd:
 'Twas not *Busiris*, but the crown, that charm'd me,
 And sent its sparkling glories to my heart:
 But thou canst soil thy diadem with slaves.

KING.

Syphoces is a king then.

QUEEN.

Ha!

KING.

Let fair *Amelia* know the king attends her. [Exit.

QUEEN.

Go, tyrant, go, and, wisely, by thy shame
 Prepare thy way to ruin: I'll o'ertake thee,

Living or dead; if dead, my ghost shall rise,
 Shriek in thy ears, and stalk before thine eyes:
 In death, I'll triumph o'er my rival's charms,
 And chill thy blood, when clasp'd within her arms;
 Alone to suffer is beneath the Great;

Tyrant, thy torment shall support my State. [Exit.



ACT.



ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE, *The General's House.**Enter the KING.*

KING.

HERE dwells my stubborn fair: I'll sooth her pride,
 And lay an humbled monarch at her feet:
 But let her well consider; if she's slow
 To welcome bliss, and dead to glory's charms,
 Then my resentment rises in proportion
 To this high grace extended to my slave,
 And turns the force of her own charms against her:
 Monarchs may court, but cannot be deny'd.

*[Enter the QUEEN, veiled.**Amelia*, dry thy tears, and lay asideThat melancholy veil——Ha! *Myris!*

QUEEN.

Myris!

A name that should like thunder strike thine ear,
 And make thee tremble in this guilty place:
 But wherefore dost thou think I meet thee here?
 Not with mean sighs, and deprecating tears,
 To humble me before thee, and increase
 The number of thy slaves, in hope to break
 Thy resolution, and avert thy crime;
 But to denounce, if thou shalt dare persist,

Th

The vengeance due to injur'd heav'n and me :
 And by this warning double thy offence :
 Think, think of vengeance, 'tis the only joy
 Which thou hast left me : I'm no more thy wife,
 Nor queen ; but know I am a woman still.

Enter AULETES.

AULETES.

May all the gods watch o'er your life and empire,
 And render omens vain ! So fierce the storm,
 Old *Memphis* from her deep foundations shakes,
 And such unheard-of prodigies hang o'er us,
 As make the boldest tremble : See the moon
 Robb'd of her light, discolour'd, without form,
 Appears a bloody sign, hung out by *Jove*,
 To speak peace broken with the sons of men ;
 The *Nile*, as frightened, shrinks within its banks ;
 And as this hour I pass'd great *Isis*' temple,
 A sudden flood of light'ning rush'd upon it,
 And laid the shrine in ashes.

KING.

O, mighty *Isis*!

Why all these signs in nature ? Why this tumult
 To tell me I am guilty ? If my crown
 The fates demand, why, let them take it back :
 My crown, indeed, I may resign ; but O !
 Who can awake the dead ?——
 'Tis hence these spectres shock my midnight thoughts,
 And nature's laws are broke to discompose me ;
 'Tis I that whirl these hurricanes in air,
 And shake the earth's foundations with my guilt.
 O *Myris* ! give me back my innocence.

QUEEN.

QUEEN.

I bought it with an empire.

KING.

Cheaply fold !

Why didst thou urge my lifted arm to strike
The pious king, when my own heart recoil'd ?

QUEEN.

Why did you yield when urg'd, and by a woman ;
You that are vain of your superior reason,
And swell with the prerogative of man ?
If you succeed, our counsel is of nought ;
You own it, not accepted, tho' enjoy'd ;
But steal the glory, and deny the favour :
Yet if a fatal consequence attend,
Then we're the authors ; then your treach'rous praise
Allows us sense enough to be condemn'd.

KING.

'Tis prudent to dissemble with her fury,
And wait a softer season for my love. [Aside.
Bid *Isis* priests attend their king's devotions ;
I'll sooth with sacrifice the angry pow'rs ;
Swift to my dungeons, bid their darksome wombs
Give up the numerous captives of my wars ;
Ten thousand lives to heav'n devoutly pour ;
Nor let the sacred knife grow cool from blood,
Till sevenfold *Nile*, infected with the stain,
In all his streams flows purple to the main. [Exit.

QUEEN.

Thin artifice ! I know the sacrifice
You most intend—But I will dash your joys ;
Thou, victim, and thy goddess, both shall feel me.

Au-

AULETES.

Madam, the prince.

QUEEN.

And he is still afflicted?

AULETES.

It grieves your faithful servant to relate it :
 He struggles manfully ; but all in vain :
 Sometimes he calls in music to his aid :
 He strives with martial strains to fire his blood,
 And rouse his soul to battle ———
 Then he relapses into love again,
 Feeds the disease, and doats upon his ruin.

QUEEN.

Why seeks he here the cause of all his sorrow?

AULETES.

He seeks not here *Mandane*, but her father ;
 For friendship is the balm of all our cares,
 Melts in the wound, and softens every fate.

[*Martial music.*]*Enter MYRON, at a distance.*

QUEEN.

Heav'ns ! what a glory blazes from his eye !
 What force, what majesty, in ev'ry motion,
 As at each step he trod upon a foe !

MYRON.

O that this ardour wou'd for ever last !
 It shall ; nor will I curse my being more ;
 Chain'd kings, and conquer'd kingdoms, are before me ;
 I'll bend the bow, and launch the whistling spear,
 Bound o'er the mountains, plunge into the stream,
 Where thickest faulchions gleam, and helmets blaze.

I'll number my own heart among my foes,
And conquer it, or die. [Exit.

QUEEN.

The thoughts of war
Will soon dislodge the fair one from his breast—
But this has broken in on my intent——
I wou'd remind thee of my late commands.

AULETES.

Madam, 'tis needless to remind your slave—
At dead of night I set the pris'ners free.

QUEEN.

Yes, set the pris'ners free—'tis great revenge ;
Such as my soul pants after—It becomes me.
O it will gall the tyrant ! stab him home ;
And if one spark of gratitude survives,
Softens *Syphoces* to my fond desire :

The tyrant's torment is my only joy ;
Ye gods ! or let me perish, or destroy ;
Or rather both ; for what has life to boast
When vice is tasteless grown, and virtue lost ?
Glory and wealth I call upon in vain,
Nor wealth, nor glory, can appease my pain ;
My every joy upbraids me with my guilt,
And triumphs tell me sacred blood is spilt. [Exit Qu.

Enter MYRON.

MYRON.

The shining images of war are fled,
The fainting trumpets languish in mine ear,
The banners furl'd, and all the sprightly blaze
Of burnish'd armour, like the setting sun,
Insensibly is vanish'd from my thought :

No

No battle, siege, or storm, sustain my soul
 In wonted grandeur, and fill out my breast:
 But softness steals upon me, melting down
 My rugged heart in languishments and sighs,
 And pours it out at my *Mandane's* feet——
 I see her e'en this moment stand before me,
 Too fair for sight, and fatal to behold:
 I have her here; I clasp her in my arms;
 And in the madness of excessive love,
 Sigh out my heart, and bleed with tenderness.

AULETES.

My lord, too much you cherish this delusion:
 She is another's.

MYRON.

Do not tell me so:

Say rather she is dead: Each heav'nly charm
 Turn'd into horror! O the pain of pains
 Is when the fair one, whom our soul is fond of,
 Gives transport, and receives it from another!
 How does my soul burn up with strong desire;
 Now shrink into itself! Now blaze again!
 I'll tear and rend the strings that tie me to her:
 If I stay longer here, I am undone.

As he is going, Enter NICANOR.

NICANOR.

My prince, and, since such honours you vouchsafe,
 My friend! I have presum'd upon your favour;
 This is my daughter's birth-day, and this night
 I dedicate to joys, which ever languish,
 If you refuse to crown them with your presence.

MYRON.

Nicanor, I was warm on other thoughts——

Ni-

NICANOR.

I am still near you in the day of danger,
 In toilsome marches, and the bloody field,
 When nations against nations clash in arms,
 And half a people in one groan expire;
 Why am I, with your helmet, thrown aside,
 Cast off, and useless, in the hour of peace?

MYRON.

Since then you press it, I must be your guest——
 Methinks I labour, as I onward move, [Aside.
 As under check of some controuling pow'r.
 What can this mean? Wine may relieve my thoughts,
 And mirth and converse lift my soul again. [Exeunt.

The back Scene draws, and shews a Banquet.

Enter MANDANE, richly dress'd.

MANDANE.

It was this day that gave me life; this day
 Shou'd give much more, shou'd give me *Memnon* too:
 But I am rival'd by his chains; they clasp
 The hero round (a cold, unkind, embrace!);
 And but an earnest of far worse to come:
 While he, my soul, in dungeon-darkness clos'd,
 Breathes damp unwholsome streams, and lives on poison,
 I am compell'd to suffer ornaments,
 To wear the rainbow, and to blaze in gems;
 To put on all the shining guilt of dress,
 When 'tis almost a crime that I still live:
 These eyes, which can't dissemble, pouring forth
 The dreadful truth, are honest to my heart:
 These robes, O *Memnon*! are *Mandane's* chains,
 And load, and gall, and wring, her bleeding heart.

[Exit Mandane.]

Enter MYRON, NICANOR, AULETES, &c. They take their places.

NICANOR.

Sound louder, found, and waft my wish to heav'n.
Hear me, ye righteous gods, and grant my pray'r;
For ever shine propitious on my daughter:
Protect her, prosper her; and when I'm dead,
Still bless me in *Mandane's* happiness! —

[The bowl goes round. Music.]

Haste, call my daughter; none can taste of joy
Till she, the mistress of the feast, is with us.

A servant brings NICANOR a letter: He reads it.

The king's commands at any hour are welcome.

MYRON.

Not leave us, general?

NICANOR.

Ha! the king here writes me,

The discontented populace, that held,
O'er midnight bowls, their desperate cabals,
Are now in bold defiance to his power:
Amid the terrors of this stormy night,
Ev'n now they deluge all yon western vale,
And form a war, impatient for the day:
The spreading poison too has caught his troops,
And the revolting soldiers stand in arms
Mix'd with seditious citizens.

MYRON.

Your call is great.

Enter MANDANE. MYRON starts from his seat in disorder.

MANDANE. *[Aside.]*

O *Memnon*! how shall I become a banquet,

Sup-

Suppress my sorrow, and comply with joy?
Severest fate! Am I deny'd to grieve?

NICANOR.

Be comforted, my child: I'll soon return.
Why dost thou make me blush? I feel my tears
Run trickling down my cheek.

MYRON. [*Aside to Auletes.*]

I must away:

Her smiles were dreadful, but her tears are death.
I can no more: I sink beneath her charms,
And feel a deadly sickness at my heart.

NICANOR.

Your cheek is pale: I dare not let you part:
You are not well——

MYRON.

A small indisposition:

I soon shall throw it from me—Farewel, general;
Conquest attend your arms.

NICANOR.

You shall not leave

Your servant's roof; 'tis an unwholesome air,
And my apartment wants a guest.

MYRON.

Nicanor,

If health returns, I shall not press my couch,
And hear of distant conquests; but o'ertake thee;
And add new terror to the front of war.

NICANOR.

Mean time, you are a guardian to my child:
Let her not miss a father in my absence:
She's all my soul holds dear.

BOTH. [*Embracing.*]

Farewel. Farewel.

Ni-

NICANOR *waits on MYRON off the stage, and returns.*

NICANOR.

My child, I feel a tenderneſs at heart
I never felt before; Come near, *Mandane*;
Let me gaze on thee, and indulge the father——
Thy dying mother with her clay-cold hand
Preſs'd mine; then, turning on thee her faint eye,
Let fall a tear of fondneſs, and expir'd——
I cannot love thee well enough; her grace
Softens thy cheek, and lives within thine eye.
Let me embrace you *both*—My heart o'erflows—
If I ſhould fall—Thy mother's monument—
But I ſhall kill thy tenderneſs—No more:
Nay, do not weep; I ſhall return again,
And with my deareſt child ſit down in peace,
And long enjoy her goodneſs.

MANDANE.

If the gods
Regard your daughter's fervent vows, you will.

NICANOR.

Farewel, my only care; my ſoul is with thee;
Regard *yourſelf*, and you remember *me*. [Exit.

Enter MYRON and AULETES.

MYRON.

No place can give me eaſe; my reſtleſs thought,
Like working billows in a troubled ſea,
Tofſes me to and fro; nor know I whither.
What am I, who, or where?—Ha! where indeed!
But let me pauſe, and aſk myſelf again,
If I am well awake——Impetuous bliſs!

My

My heart leaps up ; my mounting spirits blaze ;

My soul is in a tempest of delight !

AULETES.

My lord, you tremble, and your eyes betray

Strange tumults in your breast.

MYRON.

What hour of night ?

AULETES.

My lord, the night's far spent.

MYRON.

The gates are barr'd,

And all the household is compos'd to rest ?

AULETES.

All : And the great *Nicanor's* own apartment,

Proud to receive a royal guest, expects you.

MYRON.

Perdition on thy soul for naming him !

Nicanor ! O I never shall sleep more !

Defend me ! Whither wander'd my bold thoughts !

Broke loose from reason, how did they run mad !

And now they are come home all arm'd with stings,

And pierce my bleeding heart——

I beg the gods to disappoint my crime ;

Yet almost with them deaf to my desire :

I long, repent ; repent, and long again ;

And every moment differs from the last.

I must no longer parley with destruction :

Auletes, seize me ; force me to my chamber ;

There chain me down, and guard me from myself :

Hell rises in each thought ; 'tis time to fly. [Exeunt.

Enter MANDANE and RAMESES.

RAMESES.

I hope your fears have giv'n a false alarm.

MANDANE.

You've heard my frequent visions of the night;
 You know my father's absence, *Myron's* passion:
 Just now I met him; at my sight he started;
 Then with such ardent eyes he wander'd o'er me,
 And gaz'd with such malignity of love,
 Sending his soul out to me, in a look
 So fiercely kind, I trembled, and retired.

RAMESES.

No more; my friends (which, as I have inform'd you,
 The queen to gall the tyrant has set free)
 Are lodg'd within your call; th' appointed signal,
 If danger threatens, brings them to your rescue.

MANDANE.

Where are they?

RAMESES.

In the hall beneath your chamber:
Memnon alone is wanting; he's providing
 For your escape before the morning dawn:
 The rest in vizors, fearing to be known,
 Have ventur'd thro' the streets for your protection.

MANDANE.

Auspicious turn! then I again am happy.

RAMESES.

Auspicious turn indeed! and what compleats
 The happiness, the base man that betray'd us
 This arm laid low: I watch'd him from the king;
 I took him warm, while he, with lifted brow,
 Confess'd high thought, and triumph'd in his mien:
 I thank'd him with my dagger in his heart.
 'Tis late; refresh yourself with sleep, *Mandane*.

[Exit Mandane.]

So,

So, 'tis resolv'd, if *Myron* dares attempt
 So black a crime, it justifies the blow :
 He dies; and my poor brother's ghost shall smile.
 This way he bends his steps: I hate his sight;
 And shall till death has made it lovely to me. [Exit.

Enter MYRON and AULETES.

MYRON.

O how this passion, like a whirlpool, drives me,
 With giddy, rapid motion, round and round,
 I know not where, and draws in all my soul!
 I reason much; but reason about her,
 And where she is, all reason dies before her;
 And arguments but tell me I am conquer'd.—
 So black the night, as if no star e'er shone
 In all the wide expanse; the light'ning's flash
 But shews the darkness; and the bursting clouds
 With peals of thunder seem to rock the land:
 Not beasts of prey dare now from shelter roam,
 But howl in dens, and make the forest groan.
 What then am I? A monster, yet more fell,
 Than haunts the wilds?—I am, and threaten more:
 My breast is darker than this dreadful night,
 And feels a fiercer tempest rage within.—
 I must—I will—This leads me to her chamber—
 Did not the raven croak? [Starting.

AULETES.

I hear her not.

MYRON.

By heav'n, methinks earth trembles under me.—
 Awake, ye furies, you are wanting to me;
 O finish me in ill; O take me whole;

Or gods confirm me good, without allay,
 Nor leave me thus at variance with myself;
 Let me not thus be dash'd from side to side—
 The old man wept at parting, kneel'd before me,
 Confided in me, gave her to my care,
 Nor long since sav'd my life—And doubt I still?
 I'm guilty of the fact; here let me lie,
 And rather groan for ever in the dust,
 And float the marble pavement with my tears,
 Than rise into a monster. [*Flings himself down.*]

MANDANE, *passing at a distance, speaks to a servant.*

MANDANE.

Well, observe me.
 Before the rising sun my lord arrives,
 To seal our vows; the holy priest is with him:
 Watch to receive them at the western gate,
 And privately conduct them to my chamber. [*Exit.*]

MYRON. [*Starting up.*]

O torment! racks! and flames! then she expects him
 With open arms! Am I cast out for ever;
 For ever must despair, unless I snatch
 The present moment? She is all prepar'd;
 Her wishes waking, and her heart on fire!
 That pow'rful thought sweeps heav'n and hell before it,
 And lays all open to the prince of Egypt;
 Born to enjoy whatever he desires,
 And fling fear, anguish, and remorse, behind him.
 I see her midnight dress, her flowing hair,
 Her slacken'd bosom, her relenting mien,
 All the forbidding forms of day flung off
 For yielding softness—O I'm all confusion!

I shiver in each joint! Ah! she was made
To justify the blackest crimes, and gild
Ruin and death with her destructive charms.

AULETES.

You'll force her then?

MYRON.

Thou villain but to think it.
No; I'll solicit her with all my pow'r;
Conquest and crowns shall sparkle in her sight:
If she consent, thy prince is bless'd indeed,
Takes wings, and tow'rs above mortality;
If she resist, I put an end to pain,
And lay my breathless body at her feet.

MANDANE, *passing at a distance to her chamber,*
MYRON *meets her.*

MANDANE.

Is this well done, my lord?

MYRON.

Condemn me not
Before you hear me: Let this posture tell you,
I'm not so guilty as perhaps your fears,
Your commendable, modest fears, suspect:
Nay, do not go; you know not what you do;
I wou'd receive a favour, not constrain it;
Return, or good *Nicanor*, best of fathers,
Shall charge you with the murder of his friend.

MANDANE.

And dare you then pronounce that sacred name,
And yet persist! Were you his mortal foe,
What could your malice more?

MYRON.

O, fair *Mandane*!

I know my fault; I know your virtue too;
 But such the violence of my disorder,
 That I dare tempt e'en you: Methinks that guilt
 Has something lovely which proclaims your pow'r—
 But touch me with your hand, I die with bliss.
 Why swells your eye? By heav'n, I'd rather see
 All nature mourn, than you let fall a tear.
 I own I'm mad; but I am mad of love:
 You can't condemn me more, than I myself;
 In that we are agreed; Agree in all.
 Condemn, but pity me; repent, but yield;
 For, O, I burn, I rave, I die, with love!

MANDANE.

O Sir!—

MYRON.

Nay, do not weep so; it will kill me:
 This moment, while I speak, my eyes are darken'd;
 I cannot see thee; and my trembling limbs
 Refuse to bear their weight; all left of life
 Is that I love: If love was in our pow'r,
 The fault were mine; since not, you must comply.
 How god-like to bestow more heav'nly joys
 Than you can think, and I support, and live!

MANDANE.

O, how can you abuse your sacred reason,
 That particle of heav'n, that soul of *Jove*,
 To varnish o'er, and paint, so black a crime!
 O prince!—

MYRON.

What says *Mandane*?

MANDANE.

Sir, observe me:

My

My bursting sighs, and ever-streaming tears,
 Your noble nature has with pity seen;
 But would they not work deeper in your soul,
 Were you convinc'd my sorrows flow for you?
 For you, my lord, they flow; for I am safe
 (I know you are surpriz'd): They flow for you;
Myron, my father's friend, my prince, my guest—
Myron, my guardian god, attempts my peace,
 And need I further reason for these tears?
 Nature affords no object of concern
 So great, as to behold a gen'rous mind,
 Driv'n by a sudden gust, and dash'd on guilt—
 'Tis base; you ought not: 'Tis impracticable;
 You cannot—*Make necessity your choice;*
 Nor let one moment of defeated guilt,
 Of fruitless baseness, overthrow the glory
 Your whole illustrious life has dearly bought,
 In toilsome marches, and in fields of blood.

Enter AULETES, and servants.

AULETES.

My lord, your life's beset; the room beneath
 Is throng'd with ruffians, which but wait the signal,
 To rush and sheath their daggers in your heart.

MYRON.

Betray'd! Curst sorcerers; it was a plot,
 Concerted by them all, to take my life,
 And this the bait to tempt me to the toil.
 She dies——

AULETES.

No; first enjoy, then murder her——
 Trust to my conduct, and you still are safe.

They all are mask'd : I have my vizor too ;
But time is short ; for once confide in me.

You, Sir, for safety, fly to your apartment ;
[To the prince.

You bear *Mandane* to her closet—You [To servants.
Speed to the Southern gate, and burst it open.

[As the servants seize *Mandane*, she gives the signal.
She is borne off.

Enter RAMESES and conspirators, mask'd.

RAMESES.

The villain fled ? Perdition intercept him !
Disperse ; fly several ways ; let each man bear
A steady point, well levell'd at his heart :
If he escapes us now, success attend him ;
May he for ever triumph !

*As they pass the stage in confusion, AULETES enters
mask'd among them.*

AULETES.

Ha ! Why halt you !
Pursue, pursue ; e'en now I saw the monster,
The villain *Myron*, with these eyes I saw him,
Bearing his prize swift to the Western gate :
There, there, it burst. [A noise without.

ALL.

Away ; pursue.

AULETES. [Without.]

'Tis done ;

Advance the massy bar ; and all is safe :
Stand here, and with your lives defend the pass.

Enter MYRON.

MYRON.

I shall at least have time for vengeance on her,

And

And then I care not if I die. Barbarians!
 Their swords are pointed at my life! 'Tis well!
 But I will give them an excuse for murder;
 Such, such, a cause—Off love, and soft compassion;
 Harden each sinew of my heart to steel:
 I'll do, what done will shock myself, and those
 Whom time sets farthest from this dreadful hour.

Enter MANDANE, forc'd in by AULETES.

MANDANE.

By all the pow'rs that can revenge a falshood,
 I'm innocent from any thoughts of blood.

MYRON.

Why then your champions here in arms? 'Tis false.

MANDANE.

Ah! let my life suffice you for the wrong
 You charge upon me! O my royal master!
 My safety from all ill! my great defender!
 Or did my father but insult my tears,
 And give me to your care to suffer wrong;
 Kill me, but not your friend, but not my father;
 He loves us both, and my severe distress
 Will scarce more deeply wound him than your guilt.

[Myron walks passionately at a distance.]

MYRON.

Slaves, are you sworn against me? Stop her voice,
 And bear her to my chamber.

MANDANE.

O Sir! O Myron!

Behold my tears—Here I will fix for ever—
 I'll clasp your feet—and grow into the earth—
 O cut me, hew me—give to ev'ry limb

A separate death—but spare my spotless virtue;—
But spare my fame—You wound to distant ages—
And thro' all time my memory will bleed.

MYRON. [*As servants force in Mandane.*]
Distraction! All the pains of hell are on me!

MANDANE. [*She is borne off.*]
O Memnon! O my lord!—my life! where art thou?

[*Myron expresses sudden passion and surprize: Stands awhile fixed in astonishment; then speaks.*]

MYRON.
As many accidents concur to work
My passions up to this unheard of crime,
As if the gods design'd it—be it then
Their fault, not mine—*Memnon!* Said she not *Memnon?*
My heart began to stagger; but 'tis over—
Heav'n blast me, if I thought it possible
I could be still more curs'd—That hated dog,
Her lord, her life!—I thank her for my cure
Of all remorse and pity; this has left me
Without a check, and thrown the loosen'd reins
On my wild passion to run headlong on,
And, in her ruin, quench a double fire;
The blended rage of vengeance and of love.
Destruction full of transport! Lo, I come,
Swift on the wing, to meet my certain doom:
I know the danger, and I know the flame;
But, like our Phoenix, in so rich a flame
I plunge triumphant my devoted head,
And doat on death in that luxurious bed.



ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter MYRON in the utmost disorder, bare-headed, without light, &c. Walks disturbedly before he speaks.

MYRON.

Henceforth let no man trust the first false step
Of guilt; it hangs upon a precipice,
Whose steep descent in last perdition ends.
How far am I plung'd down beyond all thought
Which I this evening fram'd!—But be it so:
Consummate horror! guilt beyond a name!
Dare not, my soul, repent; in thee repentance
Were second guilt, and thou blasphem'st just heav'n,
By hoping mercy. Ah! my pain will cease
When gods want pow'r to punish.—Ha! the dawn—
Rise never more, O sun! let night prevail;
Eternal darkness close the world's wide scene,
And hide me from *Nicanor* and myself!
Who's there?

[*Enter Auletes.*

AULETES.

My lord?

MYRON.

Auletes?

AULETES.

Guard your life.

The house is rouz'd; the servants all alarm'd;
The gilded tapers dart from room to room;

Solemn confusion, and a trembling haste,
 Mixt with pale horror, glares on ev'ry face;
 The strengthen'd foe has rush'd upon your guard,
 And cut their passage thro' them to the gate;
 Implacable *Rameses* leads them on,
 Breathing revenge, and panting for your blood.

MYRON.

Why, let them come; let in the raging torrent:
 I wish the world would rise in arms against me;
 For I must die; and I would die in state.

*The doors are burst open: Servants pass the stage in tumult:
 RAMESES, &c. pursue MYRON's guards over the stage;
 then RAMESES and SYPHOCES enter, meeting.*

RAMESES.

Where's the prince?

SYPHOCES.

The monster stands at bay:

We can no more than shut him from escape,
 Till further force arrive.

RAMESES.

O my *Syphoces*!

SYPHOCES.

This is a grief; but not for words.

Does she still live?

RAMESES.

She lives!—but O how bless'd

Are they which are no more! By stealth I saw her;
 Cast on the ground in mourning weeds she lies;
 Her torn and loosen'd tresses shade her round;
 Thro' which her face, all pale, as she were dead,
 Gleams like a sickly moon; too great her grief
 For words or tears! but ever and anon,

After

After a dreadful, still, insidious, calm,
 Collecting all her breath, long, long, suppress'd,
 She sobs her soul out in a lengthen'd groan,
 So sad, it breaks the heart of all that hear,
 And sends her maids in agonies away.

SYPHOCES.

O tale, too mournful to be thought on !

RAMESES.

Hold——

No, let her virgins weep ; forbear, *Syphoces* ;
 Tear out an eye, but damp not our revenge ;
 Dispatch your letters ; I'll go comfort her.

[*A servant speaks aside to Rameses. Exit Syphoces.*

And has she then commanded none approach her ?

I'm sorry for it ; but I cannot blame her.

Such is the dreadful ill, that it converts

All offer'd cure into a new disease :

It shuns our love, and comfort gives her pain.

Re-enter SYPHOCES.

SYPHOCES.

Your father is return'd ; redundant *Nile*,

Broke from its channel, overflows the pass,

And sends him back to wait the waters fall.

RAMESES.

And is he then return'd ? — I tremble for him.——

I see his white head rolling in the dust :

But haste ; it is our duty to receive him. [*Exit.*

Enter MYRON.

MYRON.

I feel a pain of which I am not worthy ;

A pain, an anguish, which the honest man

Alone

Alone deserves.—Is it not wondrous strange,
 That I, who stabb'd the very heart of nature,
 Should have surviving ought of man about me?
 And yet, I know not how, of gratitude
 And friendship still the stubborn sparks survive;
 And poor *Nicanor's* torments pierce my soul.
 Confusion! he's return'd— [Starting.]

Enter NICANOR.

NICANOR. [Advancing to embrace Myron.]

My prince—

MYRON. [Turning aside, and hiding his face.]

My friend—

NICANOR.

I interrupt you, Sir—

MYRON. [Smiting his breast.]

I had thee there:

Before thou cam'st, my thoughts were bent upon thee.

NICANOR.

O Sir, you are too kind!

MYRON. [Aside.]

Death! tortures! hell!

NICANOR.

What says my prince?

MYRON.

A sudden pain,

To which I'm subject, struck across my heart:

'Tis past; I'm well again.

NICANOR.

Heav'n guard your health!

MYRON.

Dost thou then wish it?

NICANOR.

Am I then distrust'd?

Then,

Then, when I sav'd your life, I did the least
I e'er wou'd do to serve you.

MYRON.

Barbarous man!

NICANOR.

What have I done, my prince? which way offended?
Has not my life, my soul, been yours?

MYRON.

Oh!—Oh!—

NICANOR. [*Takes him by the hand.*]

By heav'n, I'm wrong'd; speak, and I'll clear myself.

MYRON.

I'm poison and destruction; curse thy gods;

I'll kill thee in compassion.—O my brain!

Away, away, away! [*Shoves him from him, going.*]

NICANOR.

Do, kill me, prince—

You shall not go; I do demand the cause,

Which has put forth thy hand against thy father!

For, thus provok'd, I'll do myself the justice,

To tell thee, youth, that I deserve that name;

Nor have thy parents lov'd thee more than I.

MYRON.

I hear them; they are on me—Loose thy hold,

Or I will plant my dagger in thy breast.

NICANOR.

Your dagger's needful! O ungrateful boy!

MYRON. [*Embrace.*]

Forgive me, Father! O my soul bleeds for thee!

[*As he is going out, Auletes meets him, and speaks to him aside.*]

What, no escape? on ev'ry side inclos'd?

Then I resolve to perish by his hand;

Tis

'Tis just I shou'd ; and meaner death I scorn :
 But how to work him to my fate, to sting
 His passion up so high, will be a task
 To me severe ; as difficult as strange.
 Support me, cruel heart ; it must be done. *[Aside.]*

NICANOR.

Now, from my very soul, I cannot tell—
 But 'tis enchantment all ; for things so strange
 Have happen'd, I might well distrust my sense :
 But, if mine eyes are true, I plainly read
 A heart in anguish ; and, I must confess,
 Your grief is just—It was inhuman in you—
 But tell the cause ; unravel, from the bottom,
 The mystery that has embroil'd our loves
 (For still, my prince, I love, since you repent) :
 What accident depriv'd me of my friend,
 And lost you to yourself ?

MYRON.

A traitor's fight !

NICANOR.

Beneath my roof ?

MYRON.

Beneath thy very helmet :

Thou art a traitor. Guard thyself. *[Draws.]*

NICANOR.

Distraction !

Traitor !—For standing by your father's throne ;
 And stemming the wild stream, that roars against it,
 Of rebel subjects, and of foreign foes ?
 For training thee to glory and to war ?
 For taking thee from out thy mother's arms
 A mortal child, and kindling in thy soul

The

The noble ardors of a future god?
Farewel; I dare not trust my temper more.

MYRON.

Grey-headed, venerable, traitor!

Enter RAMESES.

RAMESES.

Ha!

Turn, turn, blasphemer, and repress thy taunts;
All provocation's needless, but thy fight.

[He assaults the prince: Nicanor hinders him.]

NICANOR.

Forbear, my son.

RAMESES.

Forbear?

NICANOR.

If I am calm,

Your rage should cease.

RAMESES.

No; 'tis my own revenge;

Unless, Sir, you disown me for your son.

NICANOR.

Thy sword against thy prince?

RAMESES.

A villain!

NICANOR.

Hold!

RAMESES.

The worst of villains!

NICANOR.

'Tis too much.

RAMESES.

O father!——

Ni-

NICANOR.

What wouldst thou?

RAMESES.

Sir, your daughter—

NICANOR.

Rightly thought;

She best can comfort me in all my sorrow:

Call, call *Mandane*: To behold my child

Wou'd cheer me in the agonies of death:

Call her, *Rameses*—Am I disobey'd?

RAMESES.

O Sir!—

NICANOR.

What mean those transports of concern?

RAMESES.

Though I'm an outcast from your love, I weep

To open your black scene of misery.

NICANOR.

Where will this end?—O my foreboding heart!

RAMESES.

Should he, to whom, as to a god, at parting,

You gave, with streaming eyes, your soul's delight,

While yet your last embrace was warm about him,

Gloomy and dreadful as this stormy night,

Rush on your child, your comfort, your *Mandane*,

All sweet and lovely as the blushing morn,

Seize her by force, now trembling, breathless, pale,

Prostrate in anguish, tearing up the earth,

Imploring, shrieking, to the gods and you—

O hold my brain!—Look there, and think the rest.

The back scene opens. A darken'd chamber, a bed, and the curtains drawn. Women pass out, weeping, &c. NICANOR falls back on RAMESES.

NICANOR.

Is't possible!—my child! my only daughter!
The growth of my own life! that sweeten'd age
And pain!—O nature bleeds within me!

MANDANE.

Weep not, my virgins; cease your useless tears;
Kindness is thrown away upon despair,
And but provokes the sorrow it wou'd ease.

NICANOR.

Assist me forwards.

MANDANE.

Most unwelcome news!

Is he return'd? The gods support my father.
I now begin to wish he lov'd me less.

NICANOR.

There, there, she pierc'd the very tend'rest nerve:
She pities me, dear babe; she pities me:
Through all the raging tortures of her soul,
She feels my pain! But hold, my heart, to thank her;
Then burst at once, and let the pangs of death
Put Myron from my thought. [Goes to her.

MANDANE.

Severest fate

Has done its worst—I've drawn my father's tears,—

NICANOR.

Forbear to call me by that tender name;
Since I can't help thee, I wou'd fain forget
Thou art a part of me—It only sharpens
Those pangs, which, if a stranger, I should feel.—

O spare me, my *Mandane*! To behold thee
In such excess of sorrow, quite destroys me,
And I shall die, and leave thee, unreveng'd.

MANDANE.

O Sir! there are misfortunes most severe,
Which yet can bear the light, and, well sustain'd,
Adorn the sufferer.—But this affliction
Has made despair a virtue, and demands
Utter extinction, and eternal night,
As height of happiness. [Scene shuts on them.

Enter SYPHOCES.

RAMESES.

O my *Syphoces*!

SYPHOCES.

And does this move you? does this melt you down,
And pour you out in sorrow? Then fly far,
Ere *Memnon* comes; he comes with flushing cheek,
And beating heart, to bear a bride away,
And bless his fate: How dreadfully deceiv'd!

RAMESES.

The melancholy scene at length begins.

Enter MEMNON.

MEMNON.

O give me leave to yield to nature,
And indulge my joy——
My friend! my brother! O the ecstacy
That fires my veins, and dances at my heart!
You love me not, if you refuse to join
In all the just extravagance and flight
Of boundless transport on this happy hour.
Where is my soul, my bliss, my lovely bride!

Call,

Call, call her forth : O haste ; the priest expects us,
And ev'ry moment is a crime to love.

RAMESES. [*To Syphoces.*]

Speak to him :—Pr'ythee speak.

SYPHOCES.

By heav'n, I cannot.

MEMNON.

What can this mean ?

RAMESES.

Syphoces.

SYPHOCES

Nay ; *Rameses.*

MEMNON.

By all the gods, they struggle with their sorrows,
And swallow down their tears to hide them from me :

By friendship's sacred name, I charge you, speak.

[They look on him with the utmost concern, and go out on different sides of the stage.]

Was ever man thus left to dreadful thought,

And all the horrors of a black surmise !

What woe is this too big to be express'd ?

O my sad heart ! Why bod'st thou so severely ?

Mandane's life's in danger ! There indeed ;

Fortune, I fear thee still ; her beauties arm thee ;

Her virtues make thee dreadful to my thought :

But for my love, how I could laugh at fate !

Enter a servant, and gives him a paper. He reads.

Enter RAMESES. MEMNON swoons, and falls on RAMESES.

RAMESES.

'Twere happy if his soul wou'd ne'er return :

The

The gods may still be merciful in this.—

His lids begin to rise.—How fares my friend?

MEMNON.

Did *Myron* feel my pangs, you'd pity him.

Enter SYPHOCES.

SYPHOCES.

Fainting beneath th' oppression of her grief,

This way *Mandane* seeks the fresher air:

Let us withdraw; 'twill pain her to be seen,

And most of all by you.

MEMNON.

By my own heart,

I judge, and am convinc'd.—I dare not see her:

The sight wou'd strike me dead.—

[*As Memnon is going, Mandane meets him: Both start back: She shrieks. Memnon recovers himself, and falls at her knees, embracing them: She tries to disengage: He not permitting, she raises him: He takes her passionately in his arms: They continue speechless and motionless for some time.*]

RAMESES.

Was ever mournful interview like this?

See how they writhe with anguish! hear them groan!

See the large silent dew run trickling down,

As from the weeping marble; passion choaks

Their words, and they're the statues of despair!

MEMNON.

O my *Mandane*!

[*At this she violently breaks from him, and exit.*]

But one moment more.

[*As Memnon is following, Rameses holds him.*]

RAMESES.

Brother—

KING of EGYPT.

71

MEMNON.

Forgive me.—

RAMESES.

You're to blame.—

MEMNON. [*Pointing after her.*]

Look there.

My heart is bursting.

RAMESES.

With Revenge?

MEMNON.

And Love.

RAMESES.

Revenge!

MEMNON.

One dear embrace ; 'twill edge my sword.

SYPHOCES.

No, *Memnon* ; if our swords now want an edge,

They'll want for ever ; to this spot I charm thee,

By the dread words, Revenge and Liberty !

This is the crisis of our fates ; this moment

The guardian gods of *Egypt* hover o'er us ;

They watch to see us act like prudent men,

And out of ills extract our happiness.

My friends, these dire calamities, like poison,

May have their wholesome use : This sad occasion,

If manag'd artfully, revives our hopes ;

It gives *Nicanor* to our sinking faction,

And still the tyrant shakes.

RAMESES.

My father comes ;

Or snatch this moment, or despair for ever :

While passions glow, the heart, like heated steel,

Takes each impression, and is work'd at pleasure.

Enter

Enter NICANOR.

NICANOR.

Why have the gods chose out my weakest hours
To set their terrors in array against me ?
This wou'd beat down the vigour of my youth,
Much more grey hairs, and life worn down so low.
Vain man ! to be so fond of breathing long,
And spinning out a thread of misery :
The longer life, the greater choice of evil ;
The happiest man is but a wretched thing,
That steals poor comfort from comparison ;
What then am I ? Here will I sit me down,
Brood o'er my cares, and *think* myself to death.
Draw near, *Rameses* ; I was rash erewhile,
And chid thee without a cause.—How many years
Have I been cas'd in steel ?

RAMESES.

Full threescore years
Have chang'd the seasons o'er your crested brow,
And seen your fauchion dy'd in hostile blood.

NICANOR.

How many triumphs since the king has reign'd ?

RAMESES.

They number just your battles, one for one.

NICANOR.

True ; I have follow'd the rough trade of war
With some success, and can, without a blush,
Review the shaken fort, and sanguine plain.
I have thought pain a pleasure, thirst and toil
Blest objects of ambition. I remember
(Nor do my foes forget that bloody day)

When

When the barb'd arrow from my gaping thigh
Was wrench'd with labour, I disdain'd to groan,
Because I suffer'd for *Busiris*' sake.

RAMESES.

The king is not to blame.

NICANOR.

Is not the prince his son?

RAMESES.

But in himself——

NICANOR. [*Rising in passion.*]

And has he lost his guilt,
'Cause he has injur'd me? Erewhile thy blood
Was kindled at his name.—Did'st Thou not tell me
A shameful black design on poor *Amelia*?
O *Memnon*! what a glorious race is this,
To make the gods a party in our cause,
And draw down blessings on us!

MEMNON.

He that supports them
In such black crimes, is sharer of their guilt.

NICANOR.

Point out the man, and, with these wither'd hands,
I'd fly upon his throat, tho' he were lodg'd
Within the circle of *Busiris*' arms.

RAMESES.

He that prevents it not when in his power,
Supports them in their course of flaming guilt;
And you are He.

NICANOR.

Thou rav'st.

SYPHOCES.

The army's yours :
I've founded every chief; but wave your finger,
VOL. II. E Thousands

Thousands fall off the tyrant's side, and leave him
Naked of help, and open to destruction :
But sweep his minions, cut a padder's throat,
Or lop a sycophant, the work is done.

NICANOR. [*Starting.*]

What wou'd you have me do ?

MEMNON.

Let not your heart

Fly off from your own thought ; be truly great ;
Resent your country's sufferings as your own :
A generous soul is not confin'd at home,
But spreads itself abroad o'er all the public,
And *feels* for every member of the land.
What have we seen for twenty rolling years,
But one long tract of blood ! or, what is worse,
Throng'd dungeons pouring forth perpetual groans ;
And free-born men oppress'd ! Shall half mankind
Be doom'd to curse the moment of their birth ?
Shall all the mother's fondness be employ'd
To rear them up to bondage, give them strength
To bear afflictions, and support their chains ?

SYPHOCES. [*Kneeling.*]

To you the valiant youth must humbly bend,
And beg that nature's gifts, the vigorous nerve,
And graceful port design'd to bless the world,
And take your great example in the field,
May not be forc'd by lewdness in high place,
To other toils, to labour for disease,
To wither in a loath'd embrace, and die
At an inglorious distance from the foe.

RAMESES. [*Kneeling.*]

To you *Amelia* lifts her hands for safety.

MEM.

MEMNON. [*Bursting into tears.*]

To you—To you—

NICANOR.

By heav'n, he cannot speak.—I understand thee:
 Rise—Rise—my son: Rise all; your work is done;
 They perish all; these creatures of my sword.
 Have I not seen whole armies vaulted o'er
 With flying jav'lines, which shut out the day,
 And fell in rattling storms at my command,
 To slay, and bury, proud *Busiris'* foe?
 He lives and reigns; for I have been his friend:
 But I'll unmake him, and plough up the ground
 Where his proud palace stands. [*Exit.*]

MEMNON.

O my *Mandane*!

The gods by dreadful means bestow success,
 And in their vengeance most severely bless:
 From thy bright streaming eyes our triumphs flow,
 The tyrant falls, *Mandane* strikes the blow:
 So the fair moon, when seas swell high, and pour
 A wasteful deluge on the trembling shore,
 Inspires the tumult from her clouded throne,
 Where silent, pensive, pale, she sits alone,
 And all the distant ruin is her own.





ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE, *The Field.**Enter BUSIRIS and AULETES. An alarum at a distance.*

BUSIRIS.

Welcome the voice of war! Tho' loud the sound,
 It faintly speaks the language of my heart;
 It whispers what I mean. But say, *Auletes*,
 What urge these forlorn rebels in excuse
 For choosing ruin?

AULETES.

Various their complaints:

But some are loud, that while your heavy hand
 Presses whole millions with incessant toil
 (Toils fitter far for beasts than human creatures)
 In building wonders for the world to gaze at,
 Weeds are their food, their cup the muddy *Nile*.

BUSIRIS.

Do they not build for me? Let that reward them.

Yes, I will build more wonders to be gaz'd at,
 And temper all my cement with their blood.

Whose pains and art reform'd the puzzled year,

Thus drawing down the sun to human use,

And making him their servant? Who push'd off

With mountain dams the broad redundant *Nile*,

Descended from the moon, and bid it wander

A stranger stream in unaccustom'd shores?

Who

Who from the *Ganges* to the *Danube* reigns?
 But virtues are forget—Away—To arms!
 I call to mind my glorious ancestry,
 Which, for ten thousand rolling years renown'd,
 Shines up into eternity itself,
 And ends among the gods. [An alarum.]

Enter MEMNON.

AULETES.

The rebel braves us.

BUSIRIS.

Hold; let our weapons thirst one moment longer;
 And death stand still; 'tis he receives my nod.—
 Whom meet I in the midst of my own realm,
 With bold defiance on his brow?

MEMNON.

The slave,

Whom dread *Busiris* lately laid in chains;
 An emblem of his country.

BUSIRIS.

Is it thus

You thank my royal bounty?

MEMNON.

Thus you thank'd the good *Artaxes*;
 Thus you thank'd my father.

BUSIRIS.

What I have done, conclude most right and just;
 For I have done it; and the gods alone
 Shall ask me Why: Thou liv'st, altho' they fell;
 And, if they fell unjustly, greater thanks
 Are due from Thee, whom e'en injustice spar'd.

MEMNON.

Thy kindnesses are wrongs; they mean to sooth
 My injur'd soul, and steal it from revenge.

BUSIRIS.

Turn back thine eye ; behold thy troops are thin,
Thy men are rarely sprinkled o'er the field,
And yet thou carriest millions on thy tongue.

MEMNON.

All thy blood-thirsty sword has laid in dust
Are on my side ; they come in bloody swarms,
And throng my banners : Thy unequal'd crimes
Have made thee weak, and rob my victory.——

BUSIRIS.

Ha!

MEMNON.

Nay, stamp not, tyrant ; I can stamp as loud,
And raise as many dæmons at the found.

BUSIRIS.

I wear a diadem.

MEMNON.

And I a sword.

BUSIRIS.

Yet, yet submit, I give thee life.

MEMNON.

Secure your own :

No more, *Busiris* ; bid the sun farewell.

BUSIRIS.

Busiris and the sun should set together :
If this day's angry gods ordain my fate,
Know thou, I fall like some vast pyramid ;
I bury thousands in my great destruction,
And thou the first.—Slave ! in the front of battle ;
There thou shalt find me.

MEMNON.

Thou shalt find me there,

And have well paid that gratitude I owe. [Exeunt.

A continued alarum.

Enter MYRON and NICANOR, meeting.

NICANOR.

Does not mine eye strike horror through thy soul,
And shake the weapon from thy trembling arm?
Base boy! the foulness of thy guilt secures thee
From my reproach; I dare not name thy crime.

MYRON.

Old man, didst thou stand up in thy own cause,
I then should be afraid of fourscore years,
And tremble at gray hairs; but since thy frenzy
Has lent those venerable locks to cast
A gloss of virtue on the blackest crime,
Accurst rebellion! this gives back my heart,
With all its rage, and I'm a man again.

NICANOR.

Come on, and use that force in arms I taught thee;
I'll now resume the life I gave so late.

MYRON.

I grieve thou hast but half a life to lose,
And dost defraud my vengeance—At my touch,
Thou moulder'st into dust, and art forgotten:

[Preparing to fight, Myron stops short.]

Ah, no! I cannot fight with thee; begone,
And shake elsewhere; thou canst not want a death
In such a field, though I refuse it to thee:
Rameses, Memnon, give them to my sword,
Sustain'd by thousands; but to fly from thee,
From thee, most injur'd man, shall be my praise,
And rise above the conquest of my foes.

NICANOR.

'Tis not old age, th' avenging gods pursue thee!

[*He retires before Nicanor off the stage. A loud alarm.*]

Enter BUSIRIS and AULETES, in pursuit.

BUSIRIS.

'Tis well; I like this madness of the field:

Let heighten'd horrors, and a waste of death,

Inform the world, *Busiris* is in arms:

But then I grudge the glory of my sword

To slaves and rebels; while they die by me,

They cheat my vengeance, and survive in fame.

AULETES.

I panted after in the paths of death,

And cou'd not but from far behold your plume

O'ershadow slaughter'd heaps, while your bright helm

Struck a distinguish'd terror through the field,

The distant legions trembling as it blaz'd.

BUSIRIS.

Think not a crown alone lights up my name;

My hand is deep in fight. Forbid it, *Isis*!

That whilst *Busiris* treads the sanguine field,

The foremost spirit of his host shou'd conquer

But by example, and beneath the shade,

Of this high brandish'd arm. Didst thou e'er fear?

Sure 'tis an art; I know not how to fear;

'Tis one of the few things beyond my power;

And if death must be fear'd before 'tis felt,

Thy master is immortal, O *Auletes*—

But while I speak, they live!

Where fall the sounding cataracts of *Nile*,

The mountains tremble, and the waters boil;

Like

Like them, I'll rush; like them, my fury pour;
And give the future world one wonder more. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter MYRON, engaged with a party: His plume is smitten off: He drives the foe, and returns.

MYRON.
When death's so near, but dares not venture on us,
'Tis heaven's regard, a kind of salutation,
Which to ourselves our own importance shews:—
Faint as I am, and almost sick of blood,
There is one cordial would revive me still;
The sight of *Memnon*; place that fiend before me.—
[*Exit.*]

Enter MEMNON.

MEMNON.
Where, where's the prince? O give him to my sword!
His tall white plume, which, like a high-wrought foam,
Floated on the tempestuous stream of fight,
Shew'd where he swept the field; I follow'd swift,
But my approach has turn'd him into air—

[*Enter Myron.*]
The fight but now begins!

MYRON.
Why, who art thou?

MEMNON.
Prince, I am—

MYRON. [*Disdainfully.*]

Memnon!

MEMNON.

No—I'm *Mandane*.

MYRON.

Ha!

E 5 MEM-

MEMNON, [*Striking his own head and breast.*]

She's here, she's here, she's all: Her wrongs and virtues!
Virtues and wrongs! Thou worse than murderer!

MYRON.

I charge thee name her not; forbear the croak
With that ill-omen'd note.

MEMNON.

Mandane!

MYRON.

Be it so.

When I reflect on her mean Love for thee,
And Plot against my life, my pain is less.

MEMNON.

'Tis false; she meant, she knew it not; *Rameses*,
He, only he, was conscious of the thought.

MYRON.

Then I'm a wretch indeed!

MEMNON.

As such I'll use thee:

I'll crush thee like some poison on the earth;
Then haste and cleanse me in the blood of men.

MYRON.

I thank thee for this spirit which exalts thee
Into a foe, I need not blush to meet:

Now, from my soul, it joys me thou art found;
And found alive: By heav'n, so much I hate thee,
I fear'd that thou wast dead, and hadst escap'd me:
I'll drench my sword in thy detested blood,
Or soon make thee immortal by my own,
Villain!

MEMNON.

Myron!

Mr.

MYRON.

Rebel!

MEMNON.

Myron!

[They fight.]

MYRON.

Hell!

MEMNON.

Mandane!

MYRON. [Falls.]

Just the blow, and juster still,

Because imbitter'd to me by that hand

I most detest; which gives my soul an earnest

Of vast unfathomable woes to come;

That dreadful dowry for my dreadful love:

I leave the world my misery's example;

If us'd aright, no trivial legacy.

[Dies.]

Enter SYPHOCES.

SYPHOCES.

My lord, I bring you most unwelcome news:

As poor *Mandane* wander'd near the field,

In hope to see her injuries reveng'd,

Thoughtless of any sufferings but the past,

A party of the foe, saw, seiz'd, and bore her off.

MEMNON.

Vengeance and conquest now are trivial things;

Love made their prize. 'Tis impious in my soul

To entertain a thought but of her rescue:

Now, now, I plunge into the thickest war,

As some bold diver, from a precipice

Into mid ocean, to regain a gem

Whose loss impoverish'd kings; to bring it back,
Or see the day no more. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter MANDANE, prisoner.

MANDANE.

A gen'rous foe will hear his captive speak;
A benefit thus, kneeling, I implore:
Let one of all those swords that glitter round me,
Vouchsafe to hide its point within my breast.

Enter MEMNON.

MEMNON.

Ah villains! cursed Atheists! Can you bear
That posture from that form? What, what are numbers,
When I behold those eyes! Not mine the glory,
That singly thus I quell a host of foes.
Inhuman robbers! O bring back my soul!
[They force her off. He rushes in upon them, and is taken.]
Poor comfort to mankind, that they can lose
Their lives but once—But, oh! a thousand times
Be torn from what they love.

Enter RAMESES.

RAMESES.

Far have I waded in the bloody field;
Laborious through the stubborn ranks of war,
And trac'd thee in a labyrinth of death;
But thus to find thee!—Better find thee dead!
These slaves will use thee ill.

MEMNON.

Of that no more:

Myron is dead, and by this arm.

RAMESES.

I thank thee:

All

All my few spirits left exult with joy ;
I'll chase and scourge him through the lower world.

MEMNON.

Alas, thou bleed'st !

RAMESES.

Curse on the tyrant's sword ;

I bleed to death : But cou'd not leave the world
Without a last embrace. Just now I met

The poor *Mandane*.

MEMNON.

Quickly speak. What said she ?

RAMESES.

Nothing of comfort ; cease to ask me farther :
If you meet more, your meeting will be sad.—

Your arm : I faint—Ah ! what is human life ?

How, like the dial's tardy-moving shade,

Day after day slides from us unperceiv'd !

The cunning fugitive is swift by stealth ;

Too subtle is the movement to be seen ;

Yet soon the hour is up—and we are gone.

Farewel : I pity thee. [Dies.

MEMNON.

Farewel, brave friend !

Wou'd I cou'd bear thee company to rest ;

But life in all its terrors stands before me,

And shuts the gate of peace against my wishes.—

Do I not hear a peal of distant thunder ?

And see, a sudden darkness shuts the day,

And quite blots out the sun ?—But what to me

The colour of the sky ? A death-cold dew

Hangs on my brow, and all my slacken'd joints

Are shook without a cause—A groan ! From whence ?—

Again !

Again! And no one near me? Vain delusion!—
 I fear not vain! I fear some ill is tow'rd's me,
 More dreadful sure than all that's past.—*Mandane?*—
 I hop'd she was at peace, and past the reach
 Of this ill news; but such my wayward fate,
 I cannot ask a curse, but 'tis deny'd me:
 And cou'd I wish I ne'er could see her more?

Enter MANDANE, guarded.

MANDANE.
 This is my brother: A short privacy
 Is a small favour you may grant a foe.

GUARD.
 Let it be short; we may not wait your leisure.

MEMNON.
 'Tis wond'rous strange; there's something holds me from
 And keeps this foot fast rooted to the ground. [her,
 This is the last time I shall ever pray. [Kneeling.
 To me, ye gods, confine your threaten'd vengeance,
 And I will bless your mercies while I suffer!

[*Memnon and Mandane advance slowly to the front of the stage.*

MANDANE.
 What didst thou pray for?

MEMNON.
 For thy peace.

MANDANE.
 ———— 'Twas kind:
 But oh! those hands in bonds deny the blessing,
 For which they earnestly were rais'd to heav'n——

MEMNON.
 I fear so too: What we have yet to do
 Must be soon done: This meeting is our last.
 How shall we use it?

MAN.

MANDANE.

How? Consult thy chains,
And my calamities.

MEMNON.

Sad counsellors,
And cruel their advice—Are there no other?

MANDANE.

I look around—and find no glimpse of hope;
A perfect night of horror and despair.

MEMNON.

Of horror and despair indeed, *Mandane*:
Canst thou believe me? Nay, can I believe
Myself? The last thing that I wish'd for was—'Tis false!
The weight of my misfortune hurts my mind.

MANDANE.

Was what?

MEMNON.

I dare not think; to think is to look down
A precipice ten thousand fathom deep,
That turns my brain—Oh! Oh!

MANDANE.

Memnon, no more:

That silence, and those tears, need no explaining;
And it is kind, with such severe reluctance,
To think upon my death—though necessary.

MEMNON.

Ah hold! You plant a thousand daggers here:
Talk not of dying—I disown the thought:
Right is not right, and reason is not reason;
All is distraction, when I look on thee.
O all ye pitying gods! dash out from nature
Your stars, your sun, but let *Mandane* live.

MAN-

MANDANE.

No; death long since was my confirm'd resolve.

MEMNON.

Myron is dead.

MANDANE.

What joy a heart like mine
 Can feel, it feels——Had he been never born,
 I might have liv'd——'tis now——impossible.

MEMNON.

This even to my miseries I owe,
 That it discovers greater virtues still,
 In her my soul adores——O my *Mandane*!
 O glorious maid! then thou wilt be at peace——

[*Memnon walks thoughtfully; then returns.*]

Must I survive, and change thy tenderness
 For a stern master, and perpetual chains?
 Long I may groan on earth to fate their malice,
 Then through slow torments linger into death,
 No steel to stab, no wall to dash my brain!

MANDANE.

Ha!

MEMNON.

Why thus fix'd in thought? What mighty birth
 Is lab'ring in your soul? Your eyes speak wonders.—

MANDANE.

Will not the blood-hounds be content with life?

MEMNON.

Alas, *Mandane*! No; they study nature,
 To find out all her secret seats of pain,
 And carry killing to a dreadful art:
 A simple death in *Egypt* is for friends.

MANDANE.

O then it must be so!—and yet it cannot!—

MEMNON.

MEMNON.

What means this sudden paleness?

MANDANE. [*Feeling in her bosom, she swoons.*]

Heav'n assist me!

MEMNON.

My love! *Mandane!* hear me, my espous'd!

My dearest heart! the infant of my bosom!

Whom I would foster with my vital blood.

MANDANE. [*Shews a dagger.*]

'Tis well; and in return, I give thee—This.

MEMNON.

Millions of thanks, thou refuge in despair.

MANDANE.

Terrible kindness! Horrid mercy! Oh!

I cannot give it thee.

MEMNON.

Full well I know

Thy tender soul, and I must force it from thee.

[*As he is struggling with her for the dagger, she speaks.*]

MANDANE.

My lord! my soul! myself! you tear my heart:

Art thou not dearer to my eyes than light?

Doſt thou not circulate through all my veins;

Mingle with life, and form my very soul?

MEMNON.

Now, monsters, I defy you: Fate forbids

A long farewell: My guard may interpose,

And make your favour vain—Thus only thus. [*Em-*

And now—— [*Going to stab himself.*] [*brace.*

MANDANE. [*Holds his arm.*]

Ah no! Since last I saw thee, thrice I rais'd

My trembling arm, and thrice I let it fall.—

If

If you refuse compassion to my sex,
Memnon betrays me, and is *Myron's* friend.—
 As I a poniard, you supply an arm,
 And I shall still be happy in your love.

[After a pause of astonishment, he sinks gently on the earth.]

MEMNON.

From dreadful to more dreadful I am plung'd,
 And find in deepest anguish deeper still :
 I can't complain in common with mankind—
 But am a wretched species all alone :
 Must I not only lose thee, but be curs'd
 To sprinkle my own hands with thy life-blood ?

MANDANE.

It cannot be avoided.

MEMNON.

Nor perform'd.

Lift up my hand against thee as a foe !
 I, who should save thee from thy very father,
 And teach thy dearest friends to use thee well,
 Make kindness kind, and soften all their smiles ?
 O, my *Mandane* ! think how I have lov'd !
 O, my *Mandane* ! think upon thy pow'r !
 How often hast thou seen me pale with joy,
 And trembling at a smile ? And shall I—

MANDANE.

Myron !—

[At that Memnon starts up suddenly.]

MEMNON.

Ah hold ! I charge thee hold ! One glance that way
 Awakes my hell, and blows up all its flames :—
 The world turns round ; my heart is sick to death !
 O my distraction ! perfect loss of thought !

MAN-

MANDANE.

Why stand you like a statue? Are you dead?
 What do you fold so fast within your arms?
 Why, with fix'd eye-balls, do you pierce the ground?
 Why shift your place, as if you trod on fire?
 Why gnaw your lip, and groan so dreadfully?
 My lord, if I have spent whole live-long nights
 In tears, and sigh'd away the day in private,
 Only oppress'd with an excess of love,
 O turn, and speak to me.

MEMNON.

And these, no doubt,
 Are arguments that I should draw thy blood.—
 No child was ever lull'd upon the breast
 With half that tenderness has melted from thee,
 And fell like balm upon my wounded soul!
 And shall I murder thee? Yes, thus—thus—thus.—

[Embracing some time.]

MANDANE.

Alas! my lord forgets we are to die.

[Memnon gazes with wonder on the dagger.]

MEMNON.

By heav'n, I had; my soul had took her flight
 In bliss—Why, is not this our bridal-day?

MANDANE.

That way distraction lies.

MEMNON.

Indeed it does.

BOTH.

Oh! Oh!

MANDANE.

Thy sighs and groans are sharper than thy steel.
 The guard is on us.

MEM-

BUSIRIS,

MEMNON.

Then it must be done.

Sun, hide thy face, and put the world in mourning.
 Though blood start out for tears, 'tis done—But one,
 One last embrace. [*As he embraces her, she bursts into tears.*]

Let me not see a tear—I cou'd as soon
 Stab at the face of heav'n, as kill thee weeping.

MANDANE.

'Tis past; I am compos'd.

MEMNON.

And now—and now.

MANDANE.

Be not so fearful; 'tis the second blow
 Will pain my heart—indeed this will not hurt me.

MEMNON.

O thou hast stung my soul quite through and through,
 With those kind words: I had just steel'd my breast,

[*Dashing down the dagger.*]

And thou undo'st it all—I could not bear
 To raze thy skin to save the world from ruin.

MANDANE. [*Stabs herself.*]

If you're a woman, I'll be something more.—

I shall not taste of heav'n till you arrive. [*Dies.*]

MEMNON.

Struck home—and in her heart—She's dead already;
 And now with me all nature is expir'd—

My lovely bride, now we again are happy, [*Stabs himself.*]

And better worlds prepare our nuptial bow'r.—

Now every splendid object of ambition,

Which lately, with their various glosses, play'd

Upon my brain, and fool'd my idle heart,

Are taken from me by a little mist,

And all the world is vanish'd.

[*Dies.*]

A march sounded. Enter NICANOR and SYPHOCES, victorious.

The guards, which are advancing to the bodies, fly.

NICANOR.

The day's our own; the Persian's angry pow'rs
Have well repaid this morning insolence,
And turn'd the desperate fortune of the field,
By sure, tho' late, relief.

SYPHOCES.

Nicanor, friend,

I from the city bring you welcome news:
My guilty letter from the amorous queen
I spread amongst the multitude; while yet
Their blood was warm with reading the black scroll,
Myris, to view the fortune of the fight,
Leaving her palace for the Western tow'r,
Was seiz'd, torn, scatter'd, on the guilty spot,
Where her great brother fell.

NICANOR.

The gods are just.

SYPHOCES.

See where *Busiris* comes; your royal captive,
In his misfortune great; an awful ruin!
And dreadful to the conqueror!

NICANOR. [*Advancing, sees the bodies.*]

Sad fight!

A fight that teaches triumph how to mourn,
And more than justifies these streaming tears,
Even on the moment that my country's fav'd
From sore oppression, and inglorious chains.

[*He falls on his attendants.*]

A great shout. Enter BUSIRIS, wounded.

BUSIRIS.

Conquer'd? 'Tis false; I am your master still;
 Your master, though in bonds: You stand aghast
 At your good fate, and, trembling, can't enjoy.
 Now, from my soul, I hug these welcome chains
 Which shew you all *Eusiris*, and declare
 Crowns and success superfluous to my fame.—
 You think this streaming blood will low'r my thought;
 No, ye mistaken men, I smile at death;
 For living here, is living all alone;
 To me a real solitude, amid
 A throng of little beings groveling round me;
 Which yet usurp one common shape and name.
 I thank these wounds, these raging pains, which promise
 An interview with equals soon elsewhere.

[*He sees Memnon.*

Ha! Dead? 'Tis well: He rose not to my sword;
 I only wish'd his fate, and there he lies.
 Some, when they die, die all; their mould'ring clay
 Is but an emblem of their memories;
 The space quite closes up through which they pass'd:
 That I have liv'd, I leave a mark behind,
 Shall pluck the shining age from vulgar time,
 And give it whole to late posterity:
 My name is writ in mighty characters,
 Triumphant columns, and eternal domes,
 Whose splendor heighten our *Egyptian* day,
 Whose strength shall laugh at time, till their great basis,
 Old earth itself, shall fail: In after-ages,
 Who war or build, shall build or war from me;

Grow

Grow great in each, as my example fires:

'Tis I of art the future wonders raise;

I fight the future battles of the world. —

Great *Jove*, I come! *Egypt*, thou art forsaken; [*Sinks.*

Asia's impoverish'd by my sinking glories;

And the world lessens, when *Busiris* falls. [*Dies.*

SYPHOCES.

Bear the dead monarch to his pyramid;

And for what use so-e'er it was design'd

By that high-minded, but mistaken, man,

There let him lie magnificent in death;

Great was his life, great be his monument;

And on *Busiris*' nephew, young *Arsaces*,

Of gentler spirit, let the crown devolve.

From this day's vengeance, let the nations know,

Jove lays the pride of haughtiest monarchs low;

And they, who kindled with ambitious fire,

In arts and arms with most success aspire,

If void of virtue, but provoke their doom,

Grasp at their fate, and build themselves a tomb.





EPILOGUE,

By a FRIEND.

Spoken by Mrs. OLDFIELD.

THE race of critics, dull, judicious rogues,

To mournful plays deny brisk Epilogues :

Each gentle swain, and tender nymph, say they,

From a sad tale should go in tears away ;

From hence quite home should streams of sorrow shed,

And, drown'd in grief, steal supperless to bed.

This doctrine is so grave, the Sparks won't bear it ;

They love to go in humour to their claret.

The Cit, who owns a little fun worth buying,

Holds half-a-crown too much to pay for crying ;

Besides, who knows, without these healing arts,

But Love might turn your heads, and break your hearts ;

And the poor Author, by imagin'd woes,

Might people Beth'lem with our Belles and Beaux ?

Hence I, who lately bid adieu to pleasure,

Robb'd of my spouse, and my dear virgin treasure ;

I, whom you saw, despairing, breathe my last,

Am free and easy, as if nought had past ;

Again put on my airs, and play my fan ;

And fear no more that dreadful creature, Man.

—But whence does this malicious mirth begin ?—

I know, ye beasts, you reckon it no sin.

'Tis

*'Tis strange that crimes the same, in diff'rent plays,
 Should move our horror, and our laughter raise.
 Love's Jove secure the comic Actor tries;
 But, if he's wicked, in blank verse he dies.
 The farce, where wives prove frail, still makes the best;
 And the poor cuckold is a standing jest:
 But our brave bard, a virtuous son of Isis,
 Counts a bold stroke in Love among the vices;
 In blood and wounds a guilty land he dips ye,
 And wastes an empire for one ravish'd gypsy.
 What musty morals fills an Oxford head,
 To notions of pedantic virtue bred!
 There each stiff Don at galantry exclaims,
 And calls Fine men and Ladies filthy names;
 They tell you Rakes and Filts corrupt a nation;
 —Such is the prejudice of education!
 You, who know better things, will sure approve
 These scenes, that shew the boundless power of Love:
 Let, when they will, th' Italian Things appear,
 This play, we trust, shall throng an audience here.
 Bold Myron's passion, up to frenzy wrought,
 Would ill be warbled through an Eunuch's throat:
 His part, at least, his part requires a Man;
 Let Nicolani act it, if he can.*



[illegible]

THE
REVENGE.
A
TRAGEDY.

ACTED at the
THEATRE-ROYAL in DRURY-LANE, 1719.
By His MAJESTY's Servants.

Manet alta mente repostum.

VIRG.

THE
REVENGE.

A
TRAGEDY.

As performed

at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, 1710.

By His Majesty's Servants.

PROLOGUE,

By a FRIEND.

OFT has the buskin'd muse, with action mean,
 Debas'd the glory of the Tragic scene;
 While puny villains, dress'd in purple pride,
 With crimes obscene the heaven-born rage bely'd.

To her belongs to mourn the Hero's fate,
 To trace the errors of the Wise and Great;
 To mark th' excess of passions too refin'd,
 And paint the tumults of a God-like mind;
 Where, mix'd with rage, exalted thoughts combine,
 And darkest deeds with beauteous colours shine.

Such lights and shades in a well-mingl'd draught,
 By curious touch of artful pencils wrought,
 With soft deceit amuse the doubtful eye,
 Pleas'd with the conflict of the various dye.

Thus, thro' the following scenes, with sweet surprize,
 Virtue and guilt in dread confusion rise;
 And Love and Hate, at once, and Grief and Joy,
 Pity and Rage, their mingled force employ.

Here the soft Virgin sees, with secret shame,
 Her charms excell'd by friendship's purer flame;

Forc'd, with reluctant virtue, to approve

The generous Hero, who rejects her love.

Behold him there with gloomy passions stain'd,

A wife suspected, and an injur'd friend;

Yet such the toil where innocence is caught,

That rash suspicion seems without a fault.

We dread a while, lest beauty should succeed,

And almost wish ev'n virtue's self may bleed.

Mark well the black Revenge, the cruel Guile,

The traitor-fiend trampling the lovely spoil,

Of Beauty, Truth, and Innocence oppress'd;

Then let the rage of furies fire your breast.

Yet may his mighty wrongs, his just disdain,

His bleeding country, his lov'd father slain,

His martial pride, your admiration raise,

And crown him with involuntary praise.



Dramatis

Distresses Persons

M. E. M.

Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Carlos, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the

W O M E N

Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the
Don Alonzo, the first of the

T H E



Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

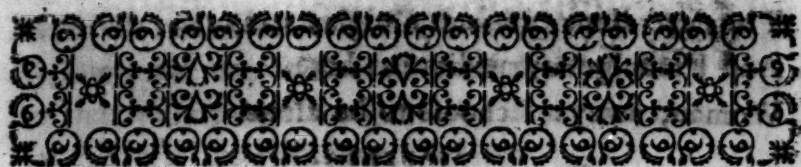
DON ALONZO, the <i>Spanish</i> General,	Mr. BOOTH.
DON CARLOS, his Friend,	Mr. WILKS.
DON ALVAREZ, a Courtier,	Mr. THURMOND.
DON MANUEL, Attendant of Don CARLOS,	} Mr. WILLIAMS.
ZANGA, a Captive <i>Moor</i> ,	

W O M E N.

LEONORA, ALVAREZ's Daughter,	Mrs. PORTER.
ISABELLA, the <i>Moor's</i> Mistress,	Mrs. HORTON.

S C E N E, S P A I N.

T H E



THE REVENGE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA.

WHETHER first nature, or long want of peace;
Has wrought my mind to this, I cannot tell;

But horrors now are not displeasing to me:

I like this rocking of the battlements:

Rage on, ye winds; burst, clouds, and waters roar!

You bear a just resemblance of my fortune,

And suit the gloomy habit of my soul.

[Enter Isabella.]

Who's there? My love?

ISABELLA.

Why have you left my bed?

Your absence more affrights me than the storm.

ZANGA.

The dead alone, in such a night, can rest;
And I indulge my meditation here.

Woman, away: I choose to be alone.

ISABELLA.

I know you do, and therefore will not leave you;
Excuse me, *Zanga*, therefore dare not leave you.
Is this a night for walks of contemplation?
Something unusual hangs upon your heart,
And I will know it; by our loves, I will.
To you I sacrific'd my virgin fame;
Ask I too much, to share in your distress?

ZANGA.

In tears? Thou fool! Then hear me, and be plung'd
In hell's abyfs, if ever it escape thee.
To strike thee with astonishment at once,
I hate *Alonzo*. First recover that,
And then thou shalt hear farther.

ISABELLA.

Hate *Alonzo*!

I own, I thought *Alonzo* most your friend;
And that he lost the master in that name.

ZANGA.

Hear then: 'Tis twice three years since that great man
(Great let me call him; for he conquer'd me)
Made me the captive of his arm in fight:
He slew my father, and threw chains o'er me,
While I, with pious rage, pursu'd revenge:
I then was young; he plac'd me near his person,
And thought me not dishonour'd by his service.
One day (May that returning day be night,
The stain, the curse of each succeeding year!)

For

For something, or for nothing, in his pride
 He struck me ; (While I tell it, do I live ?)
 He smote me on the cheek—I did not stab him ;
 For that were poor revenge—E'er since, his folly
 Has strove to bury it beneath a heap
 Of kindnesses, and thinks it is forgot.
 Insolent thought! and like a second blow !

Affronts are innocent, where men are worthless;
 And such alone can wisely drop revenge.

ISABELLA.

But with more temper, *Zanga*, tell your story:
 To see your strong emotions startles me.

ZANGA.

Yes, woman, with a temper that befits it.
 Has the dark adder venom ? So have I,
 When trod upon. Proud *Spaniard*, thou shalt feel me !
 For from that day, that day of my dishonour,
 I from that day have curs'd the rising sun,
 Which never fail'd to tell me of my shame;
 I from that day have blest the coming night,
 Which promis'd to conceal it; but in vain;
 The blow return'd for ever in my dream:
 Yet on I toil'd, and groan'd for an occasion
 Of ample vengeance: None is yet arriv'd.
 Howe'er, at present I conceive warm hopes
 Of what may wound him sore, in his ambition;
 Life of his life, and dearer than his soul,
 By nightly march he purpos'd to surprize
 The *Moorish* camp; but I have taken care
 They shall be ready to receive his favour.
 Failing in this, a cast of utmost moment,
 Would darken all the conquests he has won.

ISABELLA.
Just as I enter'd an express arriv'd.

ZANGA.
To whom?

ISABELLA.
His friend, Don Carlos.

ZANGA.
Be propitious,

O *Mahomet*, on this important hour,
And give at length my famish'd soul revenge!
What is revenge, but courage to call in

Our honour's debts, and wisdom to convert
Other's self-love into our own protection?

But see, the morning ray breaks in upon us;
I'll seek Don Carlos, and enquire my fate. [Exeunt.

Enter MANUEL and Don CARLOS.

MANUEL.
My lord Don Carlos, what brings your express?

CARLOS.
Alonzo's glory, and the *Moors* defeat.

The field is strow'd with twice ten thousand slain,
Tho' he suspects his measures were betray'd.

He'll soon arrive. O how I long to embrace
The first of heroes, and the best of friends!

I lov'd fair *Leonora* long before
The chance of battle gave me to the *Moors*,

From whom so late *Alonzo* set me free;
And while I groan'd in bondage, I deputed

This great *Alonzo*, whom her father honours,
To be my gentle advocate in love,

To stir her heart, and fan its fires, for me.

MANUEL.
And what success?

CARLOS.

Alas, the cruel maid——

Indeed, her father, who tho' high at court,
 And powerful with the king, has wealth at heart,
 To heal his devastations from the *Moors*,
 Knowing I'm richly freighted from the East,
 My fleet now sailing in the sight of *Spain*,
 (Heav'n guard it safe thro' such a dreadful storm!)
 Caresses me, and urges her to wed.

MANUEL.

Her aged father, see! leads her this way.

CARLOS.

She looks like radiant truth,
 Brought forward by the hand of hoary time——
 You to the port with speed; 'tis possible
 Some vessel is arriv'd: Heav'n grant it bring
 Tidings, which *Carlos* may receive with joy!

Enter ALVAREZ and LEONORA.

ALVAREZ.

Don *Carlos*, I am labouring in your favour
 With all a parent's soft authority,
 And earnest counsel:

CARLOS.

Angels second you!

For all my bliss or misery hangs on it.

ALVAREZ.

Daughter, the happiness of life depends
 On our discretion, and a prudent choice;
 Look into those they call unfortunate,
 And closer view'd, you'll find they are unwise:
 Some flaw in their own conduct lies beneath,

And

And 'tis the trick of fools to save their credit,
 Which brought another language into use.
 Don *Carlos* is of antient, noble blood;
 And then his wealth might mend a prince's fortune:
 For him the sun is labouring in the mines,
 A faithful slave, and turning earth to gold:
 His keels are freighted with that sacred pow'r,
 By which ev'n kings and emperors are made.
 Sir, you have my good wishes; and I hope [*To Carlos.*
 My daughter is not indisposed to hear you. [*Exit Alv.*

CARLOS.

O *Leonora*! why art thou in tears?
 Because I am less wretched than I was?
 Before your father gave me leave to woo you,
 Hush'd was your bosom, and your eye serene.
 Will you for ever help me to new pains,
 And keep reserves of torment in your hand,
 To let them loose on every dawn of joy?

LEONORA.

Think you my father too indulgent to me,
 That he claims no dominion o'er my tears?
 A daughter sure may be right dutiful,
 Whose tears alone are free from a restraint.—

CARLOS.

Ah my torn heart!

LEONORA.

Regard not me, my lord;
 I shall obey my father.

CARLOS.

Disobey him,
 Rather than come thus coldly; than come thus
 With absent eyes, and alienated mien,

Suffring

A TRAGEDY.

111

Suffering address, the victim of my love.
O let me be undone the common way,
And have the common comfort to be pity'd,
And not be ruin'd in the mask of bliss,
And so be envy'd, and be wretched too!
Love calls for Love. Not all the pride of beauty;
Those eyes, that tell us what the sun is made of;
Those lips, whose touch is to be bought with life;
Those hills of driven snow, which seen are felt:
All these possess, are nought, but as they are
The proof, the substance of an inward passion,
And the rich plunder of a taken heart.

LEONORA.

Alas! my lord, we are too delicate;
And when we grasp the happiness we wish'd,
We call on wit to argue it away:
A plainer man would not feel half your pains;
But some have too much wisdom to be happy.

CARLOS.

Had I known this before, it had been well:
I had not then solicited your father
To add to my distress; as you behave,
Your father's kindness stabs me to the heart.
Give me your hand—Nay, give it, *Leonora*:
You give it not;—nay, yet you give it not—
I ravish it.—

LEONORA.

I pray, my lord, no more.

CARLOS.

Ah! why so sad? You know each sigh does shake me;
Sighs there, are tempests here.—
I've heard, bad men would be unblest in heav'n:

What

What is my guilt, that makes me so with you?
 Have I not languish'd prostrate at thy feet?
 Have I not liv'd whole days upon thy sight?
 Have I not seen thee where thou hast not been?
 And, mad with the idea, clasp'd the wind,
 And doated upon nothing?

LEONORA.

Court me not.

Good *Carlos*, by recounting of my faults,
 And telling how ungrateful I have been:
 Alas! my lord, if talking wou'd prevail,
 I cou'd suggest much better arguments,
 Than those regards you threw away on me;
 Your valour, honour, wisdom, prais'd by all;
 But bid physicians talk our veins to temper,
 And with an argument new-set a pulse;
 Then think, my lord, of reasoning into love.

CARLOS.

Must I then despair? Do not shake me thus;
 My tempest-beaten heart is cold to death;
 Ah! turn, and let me warm me in thy beauties.
 Heav'n's! what a proof I gave, but two nights past,
 Of matchless love! To fling me at thy feet,
 I slighted friendship, and I flew from fame;
 Nor heard the summons of the next day's battle:
 But darting headlong to thy arms, I left
 The promis'd fight; I left *Alonso* too,
 To stand the war, and quell a world alone. [Trumpets.

LEONORA.

The victor comes. My lord, I must withdraw.

CARLOS.

And must you go?

LE-

A TRAGEDY.

113

LEONORA.

Why shou'd yoh with my stay?

Your friend's arrival will bring comfort to you,
My presence none; it pains you and myself:
For both our sakes, permit me to withdraw. [*Exit Leon.*]

CARLOS.

Sure, there's no peril, but in love. O how
My foes wou'd boast to see me look so pale!

Enter ALONZO.

CARLOS.

Alonzo!

ALONZO.

Carlos!—I am whole again:

Claspt in thy arms, it makes my heart entire.

CARLOS.

Whom dare I thus embrace? The conqueror of *Africk*?

ALONZO.

Yes, much more; Don *Carlos*' friend.

The conquest of the world would cost me dear,

Should it beget one thought of distance in thee:

I rise in virtues to come nearer thee:

I conquer with Don *Carlos* in my eye;

And thus I claim my victory's reward. [*Embracing him.*]

CARLOS.

A victory indeed! Your godlike arm

Has made one spot the grave of *Africa*,

Such numbers fell; and the survivors fled

As frightened passengers from off the strand,

When the tempestuous sea comes roaring on them.

ALONZO.

'Twas *Carlos* conquer'd; 'twas his cruel chains

Inflam'd me to a rage unknown before,

And threw my former actions far behind.

CAR-

CARLOS.

I love fair *Leonora*: How I love her!
 Yet still I find (I know not how it is)
 Another heart, another soul, for thee:
 Thy friendship warms, it raises, it transports
 Like music; pure the joy without allay;
 Whose very rapture is tranquility:
 But love, like wine, gives a tumultuous bliss,
 Heighten'd indeed beyond all mortal pleasures;
 But mingles pangs and madness in the bowl.

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA.

Manuel, my lord, returning from the port,
 On business, both of moment and of haste,
 Humbly begs leave to speak in private with you.

CARLOS.

In private?—Ha!—*Alonzo*, I'll return;
 No business can detain me long from thee. [*Exit Car.*]

ZANGA.

My lord *Alonzo*, I obey'd your orders.

ALONZO.

Will the fair *Leonora* pass this way?

ZANGA.

She will, my lord; and soon.

ALONZO.

Come near me, *Zanga*;
 For I dare open all my heart to thee.
 Never was such a day of triumph known!
 There's not a wounded captive in my train,
 That slowly follow'd my proud chariot wheels,
 With half a life, and beggary, and chains,
 But is a god to me: I am most wretched.

In

In his captivity, thou know'st, Don Carlos,
 My friend, (and never was a friend more dear)
 Deputed me his advocate in love,
 To talk to *Leonora's* heart, and make
 A tender party in her thoughts, for him.
 What did I do? I lov'd myself. Indeed,
 One thing there is might lessen my offence.
 (If such offence admits of being lessen'd);
 I thought him dead; for (by what fate I know not)
 His letters never reach'd me.

ZANGA. [*Aside.*]

Thanks to Zanga,
 Who thence contriv'd that evil which has happen'd.

— ALONZO.
 Yes, curs'd of heav'n! I lov'd myself; and now,
 In a late action rescued from the *Moors*,
 I have brought home my rival in my friend.

ZANGA.
 We hear, my lord, that in that action too,
 Your interposing arm preserv'd his life.

ALONZO.
 It did—with more than the expence of mine;
 For, O! this day is mention'd for their nuptials.
 But see, she comes—I'll take my leave, and die.

ZANGA. [*Aside.*]
 Hadst thou a thousand lives, thy death would please me.
 Unhappy fate! My country overcome;
 My six years hope of vengeance quite expir'd!—
 Would nature were—I will not fall alone;
 But other's groans shall tell the world my death.

Enter

Enter LEONORA.

ALONZO.

When nature ends with anguish like to this,
Sinners shall take their last leave of the sun,
And bid the light adieu.

LEONORA.

The mighty conqueror
Dismay'd! I thought you gave the foe your sorrows.

ALONZO.

O cruel insult! are those tears your sport,
Which nothing but a love for you could draw?
Africk I quell'd, in hope by that to purchase
Your leave to sigh unscorn'd; but I complain not.
'Twas but a world; and you are—*Leonora*.

LEONORA.

That passion, which you boast of, is your guilt;
A treason to your friend. You think mean of me,
To plead your crimes as motives of my love.

ALONZO.

You, Madam, ought to thank those crimes you blame;
'Tis they permit you to be thus inhuman,
Without the censure both of earth and heav'n—
I fondly thought a last look might be kind.
Farewel for ever.—This severe behaviour
Has, to my comfort, made it sweet to die.

LEONORA. [*Aside*].

Farewel for ever!—Sweet to die!—O heav'n!
Alonzo, stay; you must not thus escape me;
But hear your guilt at large.

ALONZO.

O *Leonora*!

What could I do? In duty to my friend,

A TRAGEDY.

117

I saw you ; and to see, is to admire :
 For *Carlos* did I plead, and most sincerely :
 Witness the thousand agonies it cost me ;
 You know I did ; I fought but your esteem ;
 If that is guilt, an angel had been guilty :
 I often sigh'd ; nay, wept ; but could not help it ;
 And sure it is no crime to be in pain :
 But grant my crime was great, I'm greatly curs'd.
 What would you more ? Am I not most undone ?
 This usage is like stamping on the murder'd,
 When life is fled ; most barbarous and unjust.

LEONORA. [*Going.*]

If from your guilt none suffer'd but yourself,
 It might be so——Farewel.

ALONZO.

Who suffers with me ?

LEONORA.

Enjoy your ignorance, and let me go.

ALONZO.

Alas ! what is there I can fear to know,
 Since I already know your hate ? Your actions
 Have long since told me that.

LEONORA.

They flatter'd you.

ALONZO.

How ? Flatter'd me !

LEONORA.

O search in fate no further !

I hate thee, O *Alonzo* ! How I hate thee !

ALONZO.

Indeed ! And do you weep for hatred too ?
 O what a doubtful torment heaves my heart !——
 I hope it most—and yet I dread it more.

Shou'd

Should it be so; should her tears flow from thence;
How would my soul blaze up in ecstasy!

Ah, no! How sink into the depth of horrors!

LEONORA.

Why would you force my stay?

ALONZO.

What means these tears?

LEONORA.

I weep by chance; nor have my tears a meaning——

But, O! when I first saw *Alonzo's* tears,

I knew their meaning well.

[*Alon. falls passionately on his knees, and takes her hand.*]

ALONZO.

Heavens, what is this? That excellence for which

Desire was planted in the heart of man;

Virtue's supreme reward on this side heav'n;

The cordial of my soul! and this destroys me——

Indeed I flatter'd me that thou didst hate.

LEONORA.

Alonzo, pardon me the injury

Of loving you: I struggled with my passion,

And struggled long; let that be some excuse.

ALONZO.

Unkind! You know I think your love a blessing

Beyond all human blessings; 'tis the price

Of sighs and groans, and a whole year of dying;

But O the curse of curses!—O my friend!

LEONORA.

Alas!

ALONZO.

What says my love?——Speak, *Leonora*.

LEONORA.

Was it for you, my lord, to be so quick

In

In finding out objections to our love?
Think you so strong my love, or weak my virtue,
It was unsafe to leave that part to me?

ALONZO.

Is not the day then fix'd for your espousals?

LEONORA.

Indeed, my father once had thought that way;
But marking how the marriage pain'd my heart,
Long he stood doubtful; but at last resolv'd,
Your counsel, which determines him in all,
Should finish the debate.

ALONZO.

O agony!

Must I not only lose her, but be made
Myself the instrument? Not only die,
But plunge the dagger in my heart myself?
This is refining on calamity.

LEONORA.

What! do you tremble, lest you should be mine?
For what else can you tremble? Not for that
My father places in your power to alter.

ALONZO.

What's in my power?—O yes, to stab my friend?

LEONORA.

To stab your friend were barbarous indeed!
Spare him—and murder me—I own, *Alonzo*,
You may well wonder at such words as these;
I start at them myself; they fright my nature:
Great is my fault; but blame not me alone:
Give him a little blame, who took such pains
To make me guilty.

ALONZO.

Torment!

[After a pause, Leon. speaks.]

LEONORA.

O my shame!

I sue, and sue in vain; it is most just;
When women sue, they sue to be deny'd.

You hate me, you despise me: You do well;
For what I've done, I hate and scorn myself.

O night, fall on me! I shall blush to death.

ALONZO.

First perish all.

LEONORA.

Say; what have you resolv'd?

My father comes; what answer will you give him?

ALONZO.

What answer? Let me look upon that face,
And read it there—Devote thee to another!
Not to be borne! A second look undoes me.

LEONORA.

And why undo you? Is it then, my lord,
So terrible to yield to your own wishes,
Because they happen to concur with mine?
Cruel! to take such pains to win a heart,
Which you was conscious you must break with parting.

ALONZO. [*Runs and embraces her.*]

No, *Leonora*; I am thine for ever,
In spite of *Carlos*—Ha! Who's that? My friend!

[*Starts wide from her.*]

Alas! I see him pale; I hear his groans:
He foams; he tears his hair, he raves, he bleeds;
(I know him by myself) he dies distracted.

LEONORA.

How dreadful to be cut from what we love!

ALONZO.

Ah! speak no more.

LE-

LEONORA.
And ty'd to what we hate!

ALONZO.

Oh!

LEONORA.
It is impossible?

ALONZO.

Death!

LEONORA.

Can you?

ALONZO.

Oh——

Yes, take a limb; but let my virtue 'scape.

Alas! my soul, this moment I die for thee. [*Breaks away.*]

LEONORA.

And are you perjur'd then for virtue's sake?

How often have you sworn? But go for ever.— [*Swoons.*]

ALONZO.

Heart of my heart, and essence of my joy!

Where art thou?—O, I'm thine, and thine for ever!

The groans of friendship shall be heard no more;

For whatsoever crimes I can commit,

I've felt the pains already.

LEONORA.

Hold, *Alonzo*;

And hear a maid, whom doubly thou has conquer'd:

I love thy virtue, as I love thy person;

And I adore thee for the pains it gave me:

But as I felt the pain, I'll reap the fruit;

I'll shine out in my turn, and shew the world

Thy great example was not lost upon me.

Be it enough, that I have once been guilty;

In fight of such a pattern, to persist,

Ill suits a person honour'd with your love.
 My other titles to that bliss are weak ;
 I must deserve it by refusing it :
 Thus then I tear me from thy hopes for ever.
 Shall I contribute to *Alonzo's* crimes ?
 No, tho' the life-blood gushes from my heart.
 You shall not be ashamed of *Leonora*,
 Or, that late time may put our names together.
 Nay, never shrink ; take back the bright example
 You lately lent : O take it while you may ;
 While I can give it you, and be immortal. [Exit.

ALONZO.

She's gone, and I shall see that face no more ;
 But pine in absence, and till death adore.
 When with cold dew my fainting brow is hung,
 And my eyes darken, from my fault ring tongue
 Her name will tremble in a feeble moan,
 And Love, with Fate, divide my dying groan.



ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter MANUEL and ZANGA.

ZANGA.

IF this be true, I cannot blame your pain
 For wretched *Carlos* : 'tis but human in you.
 But when arriv'd your dismal news ?

MANUEL.

This hour.

ZAN-

ZANGA.

What, not a vessel fav'd?

MANUEL.

All, all, the storm
Devour'd; and now, o'er his late envy'd fortune,
The dolphins bound, and watry mountains roar,
Triumphant in his ruin.

ZANGA.

Is *Alvarez*

Determin'd to deny his daughter to him?
That treasure was on shore; must that too join
The common wreck?

MANUEL.

Alvarez pleads indeed,
That *Leonora*'s heart is disinclined,
And pleads that only; so it was this morning,
When he concurr'd: The tempest broke the match,
And sunk his favour, when it sunk the gold:
The love of gold is double in his heart;
The vice of age, and of *Alvarez* too.

ZANGA.

How does *Don Carlos* bear it?

MANUEL.

Like a man,
Whose heart feels most a human heart can feel,
And reasons best a human head can reason.

ZANGA.

But is he then in absolute despair?

MANUEL.

Never to see his *Leonora* more:
And, quite to quench all future hope, *Alvarez*
Urges *Alonzo* to espouse his daughter
This very day; for he has learnt their loves.

ZANGA.

Ha! was not that receiv'd with ecstacy
By Don *Alonzo*?

MANUEL.

Yes, at first; but soon
A damp came o'er him; it would kill his friend.

ZANGA.

Not if his friend consented, and since now
He can't himself espouse her——

MANUEL.

Yet to ask it
Has something shocking to a generous mind;
At least *Alonzo's* spirit startles at it.
Wide is the distance between our despair,
And giving up a mistress to another.
But I must leave you. *Carlos* wants support
In his severe affliction. [Exit Manuel.

ZANGA.

Ha! it dawns! —————

It rises to me like a new-found world
To mariners long time distress'd at sea,
Sore from a storm, and all their viands spent; —
Or like the sun just rising out of chaos,
Some dregs of ancient night not quite purg'd off:
But I shall finish it—Ho! *Isabella*!

[Enter Isabella.

I thought of dying; better things come forward;
Vengeance is still alive; from her dark covert,
With all her snakes erect upon her crest,
She stalks in view, and fires me with her charms,
When, *Isabel*, arriv'd Don *Carlos* here?

ISABELLA.

Two nights ago.

A TRAGEDY.

125

ZANGA.

That was the very night
Before the battle—Memory, set down that;
It has the essence of a crocodile,
Tho' yet but in the shell—I'll give it birth——
What time did he return?

ISABELLA.

At midnight.

ZANGA.

So——

Say, did he see, that night, his *Leonora*?

ISABELLA.

No, my good lord.

ZANGA.

No matter—Tell me, woman,
Is not *Alonzo* rather brave than cautious;
Honest than subtle; above fraud himself;
Slow therefore to suspect it in another?

ISABELLA.

You best can judge; but so the world thinks of him.

ZANGA.

Why that is well——Go fetch my tablets hither.

[Exit Isabella.]

Two nights ago, my father's sacred shade
Thrice stalk'd around my bed, and smil'd upon me;
He smil'd, a joy then little understood——
It must be so—and if so, it is vengeance
Worth waking of the dead for.

[Re-enter Isabella with the tablets. Zanga writes;
then reads, as to himself.]

Thus it stands——

The father's fixt—Don *Carlos* cannot wed—
Alonzo may—but that will hurt his friend—

Nor can he ask his leave—If he did,
 He might not gain it—It is hard to give
 Our own consent to ills, tho' we must bear them,—
 Were it not then a master-piece, worth all
 The wisdom I can boast, first to persuade
Alonzo to request, it of his friend,
 His friend to grant—then, from that very grant,
 The strongest proof of friendship man can give,
 (And other motives) to work out a cause
 Of jealousy, to rack *Alonzo's* peace?—
 I have turn'd o'er the catalogue of woes,
 Which sting the heart of man, and find none equal:
 It is the *Hydra* of calamities;
 The seven-fold death: The jealous are the damn'd.
 O jealousy, each other passion's calm
 To thee, thou conflagration of the soul!
 Thou king of torments! thou grand counterpoize
 For all the transports beauty can inspire!

ISABELLA.

Alonzo comes this way.

ZANGA.

Most opportunely.

Withdraw—Ye subtle *Demons*, which reside [Ex. Isa.
 In courts, and do your work with bows and smiles,
 That little engin'ry, more mischievous
 Than fleets and armies, and the cannon's murder,
 Teach me to look a lye; give me your maze
 Of gloomy thought, and intricate design,
 To catch the man I hate, and then devour.

[Enter *Alonzo*.

My lord, I give you joy.

ALON-

ALONZO.

Of what, good *Zanga*?

ZANGA.

Is not the lovely *Leonora* yours?

ALONZO.

What will become of *Carlos*?

ZANGA.

He's your friend;

And since he can't espouse the fair himself,

Will take some comfort from *Alonzo's* fortune.

ALONZO.

Alas! thou little know'st the force of love;

Love reigns a sultan with unrivall'd sway,

Puts all relations, friendship self, to death,

If once he's jealous of it. I love *Carlos*;

Yet well I know what pangs I felt this morning

At his intended nuptials: For myself

I then felt pains, which now for him I feel.

ZANGA.

You will not wed her then?

ALONZO.

Not instantly:

Insult his broken heart the very moment!

ZANGA.

I understand you: But you'll wed hereafter,

When your friend's gone, and his first pain asswag'd?

ALONZO.

Am I to blame for that?

ZANGA.

My lord, I love

Your very errors; they are born from virtue:

Your friendship (and what nobler passion claims

The heart?) does lead you blindfold to your ruin.

Consider, wherefore did *Alvarez* break
Don Carlos' match, and wherefore urge *Alonzo*'s?
'Twas the same cause; the love of wealth: To-morrow
May see *Alonzo* in *Don Carlos*' fortune;
A higher bidder is a better friend;
And there are princes figh for *Leonora*.
When your friend's gone, you'll wed; why then the cause,
Which gives you *Leonora* now, will cease.
Carlos has lost her; should you lose her too,
Why then you heap new torments on your friend,
By that respect which labour'd to relieve him—
'Tis well; he is disturb'd; it makes him pause. [*Afide.*]

ALONZO.

'Think'st thou, my *Zanga*, should I ask *Don Carlos*,
His goodness will consent that I should wed her?

ZANGA.

I know it would.

ALONZO.

But then the cruelty
To ask it; and for *me* to ask it of him!

ZANGA.

Methinks, you are severe upon your friend:
Who was it gave him liberty and life?

ALONZO.

That is the very reason which forbids it:
Were I a stranger, I could freely speak:
In me, it so resembles a demand,
Exacting of a debt, it shocks my nature.

ZANGA.

My lord, you know the sad alternative.
Is *Leonora* worth one pang, or not?
It hurts not me, my lord, but as I love you;

Warmly

Warmly as you, I wish *Don Carlos* well ;
 But I am likewise *Don Alonzo's* friend :
 There all the difference lies between us two :
 In me, my lord, you hear another self,
 And, give me leave to add, a better too,
 Clear'd from those errors, which, tho' caus'd by virtue,
 Are such as may hereafter give you pain.—
Don Lopez, of Castile, would not demur thus.

ALONZO.

Perish the name ! What ! sacrifice the fair
 To age and illness, because set in gold ?
 I'll to *Don Carlos*, if my heart will let me :
 I have not seen him since his sore affliction ;
 But shunn'd it, as too terrible to bear :
 How shall I bear it now ? I'm struck already. [*Ex. Al.*]

ZANGA.

Half my work is done. I must secure
Don Carlos, e'er *Alonzo* speaks with him.

[*He gives a message to a servant ; then returns.*]

Proud, hated *Spain* ! oft drench'd in *Moorish* blood ;
 Dost thou not feel a deadly foe within thee ?
 Shake not thy tow'rs where-e'er I pass along,
 Conscious of ruin, and their great destroyer ?
 Shake to the centre, if *Alonzo's* dear.
 Look down, O holy prophet ! see me torture
 This Christian dog, this infidel, which dares
 To smite thy votaries, and spurn thy law ;
 And yet hopes pleasure from too radiant eyes,
 Which look as they were lighted up for thee !
 Shall he enjoy thy paradise below ?
 Blast the bold thought, and curse him with her charms.—
 But see the melancholy Lover comes.

G 5

Enter

Enter Don CARLOS.

CARLOS.

Hope, thou hast told me lies from day to day,
For more than twenty years; vile promiser!
None here are happy, but the very fool,
Or very wise; and I want fool enough,
To smile in vanities, and hug a shadow;
Nor have I wisdom to elaborate
An artificial happiness from pains:
Ev'n joys are pains, because they cannot last. [Sighs.
Yet much is talk'd of bliss; it is the art
Of such as have the world in their possession,
To give it a good name, that fools may envy;
For envy to small minds is flattery.
How many lift the head, look gay, and smile,
Against their consciences? And this we know;
Yet, knowing, disbelieve; and try again
What we have try'd, and struggle with conviction:
Each new experience gives the former credit,
And reverend grey Threescore is but a voucher,
That Thirty told us true.

ZANGA.

My noble lord,

I mourn your fate: But are no hopes surviving?

CARLOS.

No hopes. *Alvarez* has a heart of steel:

'Tis fixt; 'tis past; 'tis absolute despair.

ZANGA.

You wanted not to have your heart made tender

By your own pains, to feel a friend's distress.

CARLOS.

I understand you well. *Alonzo* loves;

I pity him.

ZANGA.

ZANGA.

I dare be sworn you do :
Yet he has other thoughts.

CARLOS.

What canst thou mean ?

ZANGA.

Indeed he has ; and fears to ask a favour,
A stranger from a stranger might request ;
What costs you Nothing, yet is All to him :
Nay, what indeed will to your glory add,
For nothing more than wishing your friend well.

CARLOS.

I pray be plain : His happiness is mine.

ZANGA.

He loves to death ; but so reveres his friend,
He can't persuade his heart to wed the maid,
Without your leave, and that he fears to ask
In perfect tenderness : I urg'd him to it,
Knowing the deadly sickness of his heart,
Your overflowing goodness to your friend,
Your wisdom, and despair yourself to wed her ;
I wrung a promise from him he would try ;
And now I come a mutual friend to both,
Without his privacy, to let you know it,
And to prepare you kindly to receive him.

CARLOS.

Ha ! if he weds, I am undone indeed :
Not Don *Alvarez* self can then relieve me.

ZANGA.

Alas ! my lord, *you know his heart is steel ;*
'Tis fixt ; 'tis past ; 'tis absolute despair.

CARLOS.

O cruel heav'n ! and is it not enough

That I must never, never see her more?
 Say, is it not enough that I must die;
 But must I be tormented in the grave;
 Ask my consent!—Must I then give her to him?
 Lead to his nuptial sheets the blushing maid?
 O! *Leonora*! never, never, never!

ZANGA. [*Afide.*]

A storm of plagues upon him! He refuses.

CARLOS.

What! wed her?—and to-day?

ZANGA.

To-day, or never:

To-morrow may some wealthier lover bring,
 And then *Alonzo* is thrown out like you;
 Then whom shall he condemn for his misfortune?
Carlos is an *Alvarez* to his love.

CARLOS.

O torment! whither shall I turn?

ZANGA.

To peace.

CARLOS.

Which is the way?

ZANGA.

His happiness is yours:

I dare not disbelieve you.

CARLOS.

Kill my friend!

Or worse! Alas! and can there be a worse?—

A worse there is! nor can my nature bear it.

ZANGA.

You have convinc'd me, 'tis a dreadful task.

I find, *Alonzo*'s quitting her this morning,

For *Carlos*' sake, in tenderness to you,

Betray'd

Betray'd me to believe it less severe
Than I perceive it is.——

CARLOS.

Thou dost upbraid me—

ZANGA.

No, my good lord; but since you can't comply,
'Tis my misfortune that I mention'd it;
For had I not, *Alonzo* would indeed
Have dy'd, as now; but not by your decree.

CARLOS.

By my decree! Do I decree his death?
I do——Shall I then lead her to his arms?
O! which side shall I take? be stabb'd? or—stab?
'Tis equal death, a choice of agonies.——
Ah, no! all other agonies are ease
To one—O *Leonora*!—Never, never!
Go, *Zanga*, go; defer the dreadful trial,
Tho' but a day; something perchance may happen
To soften all to friendship, and to love:
Go; stop my friend; let me not see him now;
But save us from an interview of death.

ZANGA.

My lord, I'm bound in duty to obey you——
If I not bring him, may *Alonzo* prosper. [*Aside.*
[Exit *Zanga*.

CARLOS.

What is this world?—Thy school, O misery!
Our only lesson is to learn to suffer;
And he who knows not that, was born for nothing.
Tho' deep my pangs, and heavy at my heart,
My comfort is, each moment takes away
A grain at least from the dead load that's on me,

And

And gives a nearer prospect of the grave.
 But put it most severely—should I live——
 Live long—Alas! there is no length in time;
 Not in thy time, O man! What's fourscore years?
 Nay, what indeed the age of time itself,
 Since cut from out eternity's wide round?
 Away then. | To a mind resolv'd and wise,
 There is an impotence in misery,
 Which makes me smile, when all its shafts are in me.
 Yet, *Leonora*—She can make time long;
 Its nature alter, as she alter'd mine:

While in the lustre of her charms I lay,
 Whole summer suns roll'd unperceiv'd away;
 I years for days, and days for moments told,
 And was surpriz'd to hear that I grew old;
 Now fate does rigidly its dues regain;
 And every moment is an age of pain.

*As he is going out, Enter ZANGA and ALONZO. ZANGA
 stops CARLOS.*

ZANGA.

Is this Don *Carlos*? This the boasted friend?
 How can you turn your back upon his sadness?
 Look on him; and then leave him, if you can.
 Whose sorrows thus depress him? Not his own:
 This moment he *could* wed, without your leave.

CARLOS.

I cannot yield, nor can I bear his griefs.

Alonzo!

[Going to him, and taking his hand.]

ALONZO.

O *Carlos*!

CARLOS.

Pray, forbear.

ALON-

ALONZO.

Art thou undone, and shall *Alonso* smile?

Alonso! who perhaps in some degree
Contributed to cause thy dreadful fate?

I was deputed guardian of thy love;

But, O! I lov'd myself. Pour down, *Afflictions*!

On this devoted head; make me your mark;

And be the world by my example taught,

How sacred it should hold the name of friend!

CARLOS.

You charge yourself unjustly; well I know

The only cause of my severe affliction.

Alvarez, curs'd *Alvarez*—So much anguish,

Felt for so small a failure, is one merit

Which faultless virtue wants. The crime was mine,

Who plac'd thee there, where only thou could'st fail;

'Tho' well I knew that dreadful post of honour

I gave thee to maintain. Ah! who could bear

Those eyes unhurt? The wounds myself have felt,

Which wounds alone should cause me to condemn thee;

They plead in thy excuse; for I too strove

To shun those fires, and found 'twas not in man.

ALONZO.

You cast in shades the failures of a friend,

And soften all; but think not you deceive me:

I know my guilt; and I implore your pardon,

As the sole glimpse I can obtain of peace.

CARLOS.

Pardon for him who, but this morning, threw

Fair *Leonora* from his heart, all bath'd

In ceaseless tears, and blushing with her Love?

Who, like a rose-leaf, wet with morning dew,

Would

Would have stuck close, and clung for ever there?
 But 'twas in thee, thro' fondness to thy friend,
 To shut thy bosom against ecstasies;
 For which, whilst this pulse beats, it beats to thee;
 While this blood flows, it flows for my *Alonzo*;
 And every wish is levell'd at thy joy.

ZANGA. [*To Alonzo.*]

My lord, my lord, this is your time to speak.

ALONZO. [*To Zanga.*]

Because he's kind? It therefore is the worst;
 For 'tis his kindness which I fear to hurt:
 Shall the same moment see him sink in woes,
 And me providing for a flood of joys,
 Rich in the plunder of his happiness?
 No; I may die; but I can never speak.

CARLOS. [*Aside.*]

Now, now it comes! they are concerting it;
 The first word strikes me dead—O *Leonora*!
 And shall another taste her fragrant breath?
 Who knows what after-time may bring to pass?
 Fathers may change, and I may wed her still.

ALONZO. [*To Zanga.*]

Do I not see him quite possess'd with anguish,
 Which, like a dæmon, writhes him to and fro;
 And shall I pour in new? No, fond desire;
 No, love! One pang at parting, and farewell:
 I have no other love but *Carlos* now.

CARLOS.

Alas, my friend! why, with such eager grasps,
 Dost press my hand, and weep upon my cheek?

ALONZO.

If, after death, our forms (as some believe)

Shal

Shall be transparent, naked every thought,
And friends meet friends, and read each other's hearts,
Thou'lt know, one day, that thou wast held most dear.
Farewel.

CARLOS.

Alonzo, stay—He cannot speak— [*Holds him.*

Left it should grieve me—Shall I be out-done?

And lose in glory, as I lose in love? [*Afide.*

I take it much unkindly, my *Alonzo*,

You think so meanly of me, not to speak,

When, well I know, your heart is near to bursting.

Have you forgot how you have bound me to you?

Your smallest friendship's liberty and life.

ALONZO.

There, there it is, my friend; it cuts me there.

How dreadful is it, to a generous mind,

To ask, when sure it cannot be deny'd!

CARLOS.

How greatly thought! In all he tow'rs above me. [*Afide.*

Then you confess you would ask something of me.

ALONZO.

No, on my soul.

ZANGA. [*To Alonzo.*]

Then lose her.

CARLOS.

Glorious spirit!

Why, what a pang has he run through for this!

By heav'n, I envy him his agonies.

Why was not mine the most illustrious lot,

Of starting at one action from below,

And flaming up into consummate greatness?

Ha! Angels, strengthen me!—It shall be so—

I can't want strength. Great actions, once conceiv'd,
 Strengthen like wine, and animate the soul,
 And call themselves to being. [*Aside.*] My *Alonzo*!
 Since thy great soul disdains to make request,
 Receive with favour that I make to thee.

ALONZO.

What means my *Carlos*?

CARLOS.

Pray observe me well:

Fate and *Alvarez* tore her from my heart;
 And, plucking up my love, they had well nigh
 Pluck'd up life too; for they were twin'd together:
 Of that no more—What now does reason bid?
 I cannot wed—Farewel my happiness;
 But, O my soul! with care provide for hers:
 In life, how weak, how helpless, is a woman!
 Soon hurt, in happiness itself unsafe,
 And often wounded, while she plucks the rose;
 So properly the object of affliction,
 That heav'n is pleas'd to make distress become her,
 And dresses her most amiably in tears.
 Take then my heart in dowry with the fair;
 Be thou her guardian, and thou must be mine;
 Shut out the thousand pressing ills of life
 With thy surrounding arms—Do this; and then
 Set down the liberty and life thou gav'st me
 As little things, as essays of thy goodness,
 And rudiments of friendship so divine.

ALONZO.

There is a grandeur in thy goodness to me,
 Which with thy foes would render thee ador'd:
 But have a care; nor think I can be pleas'd

With

With any thing that lays in pains for thee :
Thou dost dissemble, and thy heart's in tears.

CARLOS.

My heart's in health, my spirits dance their round,
And at my eye pleasure looks out in smiles.

ALONZO.

And canst thou, canst thou part with *Leonora*?

CARLOS.

I do not part with her ; I give her thee.

ALONZO.

O *Carlos* !

CARLOS.

Don't distrust me ; I'm sincere ;
Nor is it more than simple justice in me :
This morn didst thou resign her for my sake ;
I but perform a virtue learnt from thee ;
Discharge a debt, and pay her to thy wishes.

ALONZO.

Ah ! how ? — But think not words were ever made
For such occasions : Silence, tears, embraces,
Are languid eloquence : I'll seek relief
In absence from the pain of so much goodness ;
There thank the blest above, thy sole superiors,
Adore, and raise my thoughts of them by thee. [*Exit.*]

ZANGA. [*Afide.*]

Thus far success has crown'd my boldest hope :
My next care is, to hasten these new nuptials ;
And then my master-works begin to play.
Why this was greatly done, without one sigh [*To Car.*]
To carry such a glory to its period.

CARLOS.

Too soon thou praïsest me. He's gone ; and now

I must unshroud my over-burden'd heart,
 And let it flow: I would not grieve my friend
 With tears, nor interrupt my great design;
 Great, sure, as ever human breast durst think of.
 But now my sorrows, long with pain suppress'd,
 Burst their confinement with impetuous sway,
 O'erwhelm all bounds, and bear e'en life away:
 So, till the day was won, the *Greek* renown'd,
 With anguish, wore the arrow in his wound;
 Then drew the shaft from out his tortur'd side,
 Let gush the torrent of his blood, and dy'd. [*Exeunt.*]



ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter ZANGA and ISABELLA.

ZANGA.

O Joy, thou welcome stranger! twice three years
 I have not felt thy vital beam; but now
 It warms my veins, and plays around my heart;
 A fiery instinct lifts me from the ground,
 And I could mount——The spirits numberless
 Of my dear countrymen, which yesterday
 Left their poor bleeding bodies on the field,
 Are all assembled here, and o'er inform me.——
 O bridegroom! great indeed thy present bliss;
 Yet ev'n by me unenvy'd; for be sure
 It is thy last, thy last smile, that which now
 Sits on thy cheek; enjoy it while thou may'st;

Anguish,

Anguish, and groans, and death, bespeak to-morrow.
My *Isabella*!

ISABELLA.

What commands my *Moor*?

ZANGA.

My fair ally! my lovely minister!
'Twas well *Alvarez*, by my arts impell'd,
(To plunge Don *Carlos* in the last despair,
And so prevent all future molestation)
Finish'd the nuptials soon as he resolv'd them;
This conduct ripen'd all for me, and ruin.
Scarce had the priest the holy rite perform'd,
When I, by sacred inspiration, forg'd
That letter, which I trusted to thy hand;
That letter, which, in glowing terms, conveys,
From happy *Carlos* to fair *Leonora*,
The most profound acknowledgement of heart
For wond'rous transports, which he never knew.
This is a good subservient artifice,
To aid the nobler workings of my brain.

ISABELLA.

I quickly dropt it in the bride's apartment,
As you commanded.

ZANGA.

With a lucky hand;
For soon *Alonzo* found it. I observ'd him
From out my secret stand: He took it up;
But scarce was it unfolded to his sight,
When he, as if an arrow pierc'd his eye,
Started, and, trembling, dropt it on the ground.
Pale and aghast awhile my victim stood,
Disguis'd a sigh or two, and puff'd them from him;
Then

Then rubb'd his brow, and took it up again :
 At first he look'd as if he meant to read it ;
 But, check'd by rising fears, he crush'd it thus ;
 And thrust it, like an adder, in his bosom.

ISABELLA.

But if he read it not, it cannot sting him ;
 At least not mortally.

ZANGA.

At first I thought it so ;
 But farther thought informs me otherwise,
 And turns this disappointment to account.
 He more shall credit it, because unseen,
 (If 'tis unseen) as thou anon may'st find.

ISABELLA.

That would indeed commend my Zanga's skill.

ZANGA.

This, *Isabella*, is Don Carlos' picture ;
 Take it, and so dispose of it, that, sound,
 It may rise up a witness of her love,
 Under her pillow, in her cabinet,
 Or elsewhere, as shall best promote our end.

ISABELLA.

I'll weigh it as its consequence requires ;
 Then do my utmost to deserve your smile. [*Exit Isab.*

ZANGA.

Is that *Alonzo* prostrate on the ground ?——
 Now he starts up like flame from sleeping embers,
 And wild distraction glares from either eye.
 If thus a slight surmise can work his soul,
 How will the fulness of the tempest tear him !

Enter

Enter ALONZO.

ALONZO.

And yet it cannot be—I am deceiv'd——
I injure her: She wears the face of heav'n.

ZANGA. [*Afide*]

He doubts.

ALONZO.

I dare not look on this again:

If the first glance, which gave suspicion only,
Had such effect, so smote my heart and brain,
The certainty would dash me all in pieces.

It cannot—Ha! it must, it must be true. [*Starts.*]

ZANGA. [*Afide.*]

Hold there, and we succeed. He has descry'd me,
And (for he thinks I love him) will unfold
His aching heart, and rest it on my counsel.
I'll seem to go, to make my stay more sure.

ALONZO.

Hold, Zanga; turn.

ZANGA.

My lord.

ALONZO.

Shut close the door

That not a spirit find an entrance here.

ZANGA.

My lord's obey'd.

ALONZO.

I see that thou art frightened:

If thou dost love me, I shall fill thy heart
With scorpions stings.

ZANGA.

If I do love, my lord?

ALONZO.

Come near me; let me rest upon thy bosom; (What

(What pillow like the bosom of a friend ?)
For I am sick at heart.

ZANGA.

Speak, Sir, O speak,
And take me from the rack.

ALONZO.

And is there need
Of words ? Behold a wonder ! See my tears !

ZANGA.

I feel them too : Heav'n grant my senses fail me !
I rather would lose them, than have this real.

ALONZO.

Go, take a round thro' all things in thy thought,
And find that one ; for there is only one
Which could extort my tears ; find that, and tell
Thyself my mis'ry, and spare me the pain.

ZANGA

Sorrow can think but ill—I am bewilder'd ;
I know not where I am.

ALONZO.

Think, think no more ;
It ne'er can enter in an honest heart.
I'll tell thee then—I cannot—Yet I do,
By wanting force to give it utterance.

ZANGA.

Speak ; ease your heart ; its throbs will break your bosom.

ALONZO.

I am most happy ; mine is victory,
Mine the king's favour, mine the nation's shout,
And great men make their fortunes of my smiles.
O curse of curses ! In the lap of blessing
To be most curst !——My *Leonora's* false !

ZANGA.

Save me, my lord.

ALON-

ALONZO.

My *Leonora's* false. [*Gives him the letter.*]

ZANGA.

Then heav'n has lost its image here on earth.

[*While Zanga reads the letter, he trembles, and shews the utmost concern.*]

ALONZO.

Good-natur'd man! He makes my pains his own.

I durst not read it; but I read it now

In thy concern.

ZANGA.

Did you not read it then?

ALONZO.

Mine eye just touch'd it, and could bear no more.

ZANGA. [*Tears the letter.*]

Thus perish all that gives *Alonzo* pain.

ALONZO.

Why didst thou tear it?

ZANGA.

Think of it no more:

'Twas your mistake, and groundless are your fears.

ALONZO.

And didst thou tremble then for my mistake?

Or give the whole contents; or, by the pangs

That feed upon my heart, thy life's in danger.

ZANGA.

Is this *Alonzo's* language to his *Zanga*?

Draw forth your sword, and find the secret here:

For whose sake is it, think you, I conceal it?

Wherefore this rage? Because I seek your peace?

I have no interest in suppressing it,

But what good-natur'd tenderness for you

Obliges me to have. Not mine the heart

That will be rent in two ; not mine the same
That will be damn'd, tho' all the world should know it,

ALONZO.

Then my worst fears are true, and life is past.

ZANGA.

What has the rashness of my passion utter'd ?

I know not what ; but rage is our distraction,

And all its words are wind——Yet, sure, I think,

I nothing own'd—But grant I did confess ;

What is a letter ? Letters may be forg'd.

For heav'n's sweet sake, my lord, lift up your heart ;

Some foe to your repose——

ALONZO.

So heav'n look on me,

As I can't find the man I have offended.

ZANGA.

Indeed ! [*Aside*]—Our innocence is not our shield :

They take offence, who have not been offended ;

They seek our ruin too, who speak us fair ;

And death is often ambush'd in their smiles.

We know not whom we have to fear. 'Tis certain,

A letter may be forg'd ; and in a point

Of such a dreadful consequence as this,

One would rely on nought that *might* be false——

Think ; have you any other cause to doubt her ?——

Away ; you can find none : Resume your spirit,

All's well again.

ALONZO.

O that it were !

ZANGA.

It is :

For who would credit that, which, credited,

Makes hell superfluous by superior pains,
Without such proofs as cannot be withstood?
Has she not ever been to virtue train'd?
Is not her fame as spotless as the sun,
Her sex's envy, and the boast of *Spain*?

ALONZO.

O *Zanga*! It is that confounds me most,
That full in opposition to appearance

ZANGA.

No more, my lord; for you condemn yourself.
What is absurdity, but to believe
Against appearance? — You can't yet, I find,
Subdue your passion to your better sense; —
And, truth to tell, it does not much displease me:
'Tis fit our indiscretions should be check'd,
With some degrees of pain.

ALONZO.

What indiscretion?

ZANGA.

Come, you must bear to hear your faults from me.
Had you not sent Don *Carlos* to the court
The night before the battle, that foul slave,
Who forg'd the senseless scroll which gives you pain,
Had wanted footing for his villainy.

ALONZO.

I sent him not.

ZANGA.

Not send him! — Ha! — That strikes me.

I thought he came on message to the king:
Is there another cause could justify
His shunning danger, and the promis'd fight?

H. 2

But

But I perhaps may think too rigidly;
So long an absence, and impatient love——

ALONZO.
In my confusion, that had quite escap'd me:
By heav'n, my wounded soul does bleed afresh;
'Tis clear as day—for *Carlos* is so brave,
He lives not but on fame, he hunts for danger,
And is enamour'd of the face of death:
How then could he decline the next day's battle,
But for the transports?—O, it must be so—
Inhuman, by the loss of his own honour,
To buy the ruin of his friend!

ZANGA.
You wrong him:
He knew not of your love.

ALONZO.
Ha!—

ZANGA. [*Aside.*]
That stings home.

ALONZO.
Indeed, he knew not of my treacherous love——
Proofs rise on proofs, and still the last the strongest,
Th' eternal law of things declare it true,
Which calls for judgments on distinguish'd guilt,
And loves to make our crime our punishment.
Love is my torture; Love was first my crime:
For she was his, my friend's, and he (O horror!)
Confided all in me. O sacred faith!
How dearly I abide thy violation!

ZANGA.
Were then their loves far gone?

ALON-

A TRAGEDY.

149

ALONZO.

The father's will
There bore a total sway; and he, as soon
As news arriv'd, that *Carlos*' fleet was seen
From off our coast, fir'd with the love of gold,
Determin'd, that the very sun which saw
Carlos' return, should see his daughter wed.

ZANGA.

Indeed, my lord! Then you must pardon me,
If I presume to mitigate the crime:
Consider, strong allurements soften guilt;
Long was his absence, ardent was his love;
At midnight his return, the next day destin'd
For his espousals——'twas a strong temptation.

ALONZO.

Temptation!

ZANGA.

'Twas but gaining of one night.

ALONZO.

One night!

ZANGA.

That crime could ne'er return again.

ALONZO.

Again! By heav'n, thou dost insult thy lord.
Temptation! One night gain'd! O stings and death!
And am I then undone? Alas, my *Zanga*!
And dost thou own it too? Deny it still,
And rescue me one moment from distraction.

ZANGA.

My lord, I hope the best.

ALONZO.

False, foolish hope,
And insolent to me! Thou know'st it false;

It is as glaring as the noon-tide sun.
 Devil; this morning, after three years coldness,
 To rush at once into a passion for me!
 'Twas time to feign; 'twas time to get another,
 When her first fool was fated with her beauties.

ZANGA.

What says my lord? Did *Leonora* then
 Never before disclose her passion for you?

ALONZO.

Never.

ZANGA.

Throughout the whole three years?

ALONZO.

O never! never!—

Why, *Zanga*, should'st thou strive? 'Tis all in vain;
 Tho' thy soul labours, it can find no reed
 For hope to catch at. Ah! I'm plunging down
 Ten thousand thousand fathoms in despair.

ZANGA.

Hold, Sir; I'll break your fall—Wave ev'ry fear,
 And be a man again—Had he enjoy'd her,
 Be most assur'd, he had resign'd her to you
 With less reluctance.

ALONZO.

Ha! resign her to me! —

Resign her!—Who resign'd her?—Double death!
 How could I doubt so long? My heart is broke:
 First love her to distraction! then resign her!

ZANGA.

But was it not with utmost agony?

ALONZO.

Grant that, he still resign'd her; that's enough:
 Would he pluck out his eye to give it me?

Tear

Tear out his heart?—She was his heart no more—
Nor was it with reluctance he resign'd her.
By heav'n, he ask'd, he courted, me to wed:
I thought it strange; 'tis now no longer so.

ZANGA.

Was't his request? Are you right sure of that?—
I fear the letter was not all a tale.

ALONZO.

A tale! There's proof equivalent to fight.

ZANGA.

I should distrust my fight on this occasion.

ALONZO.

And so should I; by heav'n, I think I should.

What, *Leonora* the divine, by whom

We guess'd at angels? O! I'm all confusion.

ZANGA.

You are now too much ruffled to think clearly,
Since bliss and horror, life and death, hang on it,
Go to your chamber; there maturely weigh
Each circumstance; consider, above all,
That it is jealousy's peculiar nature
To swell small things to great; nay, out of nought
To conjure much; and then to lose its reason
Amid the hideous phantoms it has form'd.

ALONZO.

Had I ten thousand lives, I'd give them all
To be deceiv'd: I fear 'tis doomsday with me,
And yet she seem'd so pure, that I thought heav'n
Borrow'd her form for virtue's self to wear,
To gain her lovers with the sons of men. [Exit Alonzo.]

Enter ISABELLA.

ZANGA.

Thus far it works auspiciously. My patient
Thrives, underneath my hand, in misery:
He's gone to think; that is, to be distracted.

ISABELLA.

I overheard your conference, and saw you,
To my amazement, tear the letter.

ZANGA.

There,

Thère, *Isabella*, I out-did myself:
For tearing it, I not secure it only
In its first force, but superadd a new:
For who can now the character examine
To cause a doubt, much less detect the fraud?
And, after tearing it, as loth to shew
The foul contents, if I should swear it now
A forgery, my lord would disbelieve me;
Nay, more would disbelieve, the more I swore.
But is the picture happily dispos'd of?

ISABELLA.

It is.

ZANGA.

That's well—Ah! what is well? O pang to think!
O dire necessity! Is this my province?
Whither, my soul, ah! whither, art thou sunk
Beneath thy sphere? E'er while, far, far above
Such little arts, dissemblings, falsehoods, frauds,
The trash of villainy itself, which falls
To cowards, and poor wretches wanting bread:
Does this become a soldier? This become
Whom armies follow'd, and a people lov'd?

My

My martial glory withers at the thought :
 But great my end ; and since there are no other,
 These means are just ; they shine with borrow'd light,
 Illustrious from the purpose they pursue.

And greater sure my merit, who, to gain
 A point sublime, can such a task sustain ;
 To wade thro' ways obscene, my honour bend,
 And shock my nature, to attain my end :
 Late time shall wonder ; that my joys will raise ;
 For wonder is involuntary praise.



ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter ALONZO and ZANGA.

ALONZO.

O What a pain to think ! when every thought,
 Perplexing thought, in intricacies runs,
 And reason knits th' inextricable toil,
 In which herself is taken ! I am lost ;
 Poor insect that I am, I am involv'd,
 And bury'd in the web myself have wrought !
 One argument is balanc'd by another,
 And reason reason meets in doubtful fight,
 And proofs are countermin'd by equal proofs,
 No more I'll bear this battle of the mind,
 This inward anarchy ; but find my wife,
 And, to her trembling heart presenting death,
 Force all the secret from her.

H 5

ZAN-

THE REVENGE.

ZANCA.

O forbear!
You totter on the very brink of ruin.

ALONZO.

What dost thou mean?

ZANCA. [*Aside.*]

That will discover all,
And kill my hopes: What can I think or do?

ALONZO.

What dost thou murmur?

ZANCA.

Force the secret from her!

What's perjury to such a crime as this?
Will she confess it then? O groundless hope!
But rest assur'd, she'll make this accusation,
Or false or true, your ruin with the king;
Such is her father's power.

ALONZO.

No more; I care not:

Rather than groan beneath this load, I'll die.

ZANCA.

But for what better will you change this load?
Grant you should know it, would not that be worse?

ALONZO.

No; it would cure me of my mortal pangs:
By hatred and contempt, I should despise her;
And all my love-bred agonies would vanish.

ZANCA.

Ah! were I sure of that, my lord——

ALONZO.

What then?

ZANCA.

You should not hazard life to gain the secret.

ALONZO.

ALONZO.

What dost thou mean? Thou know'st I'm on the rack:
I'll not be play'd with; speak, if thou hast aught,
Or I this instant fly to *Leonora*.

ZANGA.

That is, to death. My lord, I am not yet
Quite so far gone in guilt to suffer it;
Tho' gone too far, heav'n knows—'Tis I am guilty—
I have took pains, as you I know observ'd,
To hinder you from diving in the secret,
And turn'd aside your thoughts from the detection.

ALONZO.

Thou dost confound me.

ZANGA.

I confound myself;
And frankly own, though to my shame I own it,
Nought but your life in danger could have torn
The secret out, and made me own my crime.

ALONZO.

Speak quickly; Zanga, speak.

ZANGA.

Not yet, dread Sir;
First I must be assur'd, that if you find
The fair one guilty, scorn, as you assur'd me,
Shall conquer love and rage, and heal your soul.

ALONZO.

O! 'twill, by heav'n.

ZANGA.

Alas! I fear it much,
And scarce can hope so far; but I of this
Exact your solemn oath, that you'll abstain
From all self-violence, and save my lord.

H 6

ALON-

1567 THE REVENGE

ALONZO. I trebly swear.

ZANGA. You'll bear it like a man?

ALONZO.

A god.

ZANGA.

Such have you been to me; these tears confess it;
And pour'd forth miracles of kindness on me;
And what amends is now within my pow'r,
But to confess, expose myself to justice,
And, as a blessing, claim my punishment?
Know then, Don Carlos—

ALONZO.

Oh!

ZANGA.

You cannot bear it.

ALONZO.

Go on; I'll have it, tho' it blast mankind:
I'll have it all, and instantly.—Go on.

ZANGA.

Don Carlos did return at dead of night—

Enter LEONORA.

LEONORA.

My lord Alonzo, you are absent from us,
And quite undo our joy.

ALONZO.

I'll come, my Love:

Be not our friends deserted by us both;
I'll follow you this moment.

LEONORA.

My good lord,

I do observe feverity of thought
Upon your brow. Aught hear you from the Moors?

ALONZO.

No, my delight.

LEONORA.

bog A

What then employ'd your mind?

ALONZO.

Thou, love, and only thou; so heav'n befriended me,
As other thought can find no entrance here.

LEONORA.

How good in you, my lord, whom nations cares
Solicit, and a world in arms obeys,
To drop one thought on me!

ALONZO. [*He shews the utmost impatience.*]

Dost thou then prize it?

LEONORA.

Do you then ask it?

ALONZO.

Know then, to thy comfort,
Thou hast me all; my throbbing heart is full
With thee alone; I've thought of nothing else;
Nor shall, I from my soul believe, till death.
My life, our friends expects thee.

LEONORA.

I obey. [*Ex. Leon*]

ALONZO.

Is that the face of curs'd hypocrisy?
If she is guilty, stars are made of darkness,
And beauty shall no more belong to heav'n—
Don Carlos did return at dead of night
Proceed, good Zanga; so thy tale began.

ZANGA.

Don Carlos did return at dead of night;

That

That night, by chance (ill chance for me) did I
 Command the watch that guards the palace gate:
 He told me he had letters for the king,
 Dispatch'd from you.

ALONZO.
 The villain ly'd.

ZANGA.

My lord,

I pray forbear—Transported at his sight,
 After so long a bondage, and your friend,
 (Who could suspect him of an artifice?)
 No farther I enquir'd; but let him pass,
 False to my trust; at least imprudent in it.
 Our watch reliev'd, I went into the garden,
 As is my custom when the night's serene,
 And took a moon-light walk; when soon I heard
 A rustling in an arbour that was near me:
 I saw two lovers in each other's arms,
 Embracing and embrac'd: Anon the man
 Arose; and, falling back some paces from her,
 Gaz'd ardently awhile; then rush'd at once;
 And throwing all himself into her bosom,
 There softly sigh'd; "O night of ecstasy!
 "When shall we meet again?"—Don Carlos then
 Led *Leonora* forth.

ALONZO.

O! O my heart! [*He sinks into a chair.*]

ZANGA.

Groan on, and with the sound refresh my soul.
 'Tis thro' his heart; his knees smite one another:
 'Tis thro' his brain; his eye-balls roll in anguish. [*Aside.*]
 My lord, my lord, why will you rack my soul?

Speak,

Speak to me ; let me know that you still live.
 Do you not know me, Sir ? Pray look upon me :
 You think too deeply : I'm your own *Zanga*,
 So lov'd, so cherish'd, and so faithful to you.—
 Where start you in such fury ? Nay, my lord,
 For heav'n's sake, sheath your sword ! What can this
 Fool that I was, to trust you with the secret ; [mean ?
 And you unkind, to break your word with me.
 O passion for a woman ! On the ground ?
 Where is your boasted courage ? Where your scorn,
 And prudent rage, that was to cure your grief,
 And chace your love-bred agonies away ?
 Rise, Sir, for honour's sake. Why should the *Moors*,
 Why should the vanquish'd, triumph ?

ALONZO.

Would to heaven,
 That I were lower still ! O she was All !
 My fame, my friendship, and my love of arms,
 All stoop'd to her ; my blood was her possession :
 Deep in the secret foldings of my heart,
 She liv'd with life, and far the dearer she :
 But—and no more—set nature in a blaze ;
 Give her a fit of jealousy—away—
 To think on't is the torment of the damn'd ;
 And not to think on't, is impossible.
 How fair the cheek, that first alarm'd my soul !
 How bright the eye, that sets it on a flame !
 How soft the breast, on which I laid my peace
 For years to slumber, unawak'd by care !
 How fierce the transport ! how sublime the bliss ! —
 How deep, how black, the horror, and despair !

ZAN-

ZANGA.

You said, you'd bear it like a man.

ALONZO.

I do.

Am I not most distracted?

ZANGA.

Pray be calm.

ALONZO.

As hurricanes: Be thou assur'd of that.

ZANGA.

Is this the wife *Alonzo*?

ALONZO.

Villain, no:

He dy'd in th'arbour; he was murder'd there:

I am his dæmon, tho'—my wife! my wife!—

ZANGA.

Alas! he weeps.

ALONZO.

Go, dig her grave.

ZANGA.

My lord!

ALONZO.

But that her blood's too hot, I would carouse it
Around my bridal-board.ZANGA. [*Afide.*]

And I would pledge thee.

ALONZO.

But I may talk too fast. Pray let me think.

And reason mildly.—Wedded and undone.

Before one night descends—O hasty evil!

What friend to comfort me in this extreme!

Where's *Carlos*? Why is *Carlos* absent from me?

Does he know what has happen'd?

ZAN.

ZANGA.

My good lord!

ALONZO.

O depth of horrors! He!—my bosom friend!

ZANGA.

Alas! compose yourself, my lord.

ALONZO.

To death.

Gaze on her with both eyes so ardently!

Give them the vulturs; tear them all in pieces!

ZANGA. [*Afide.*]

Most excellent!

ALONZO.

Hark! you can keep a secret.

In yonder arbour bound with jessamin;

Who's that? What villain's that? Unhand her—Mur-

Tear them asunder—Murder—How they grind [der!—

My heart betwixt them!—O let go my heart!

Yet let it go—*Embracing and embrac'd!*

O pestilence!—Who let him in? A traitor.

[*Goes to stab Zanga: he prevents him.*]

Alas! my head turns round, and my limbs fail me.

ZANGA.

My lord!

ALONZO.

O villain, villain, most accurst!

If thou didst know it, why didst let me wed?

ZANGA.

Hear me, my lord; your anger will abate:

I knew it not; I saw them in the garden;

But saw no more than you might well expect

To see in lovers destin'd for each other:

By heav'n, I thought their meeting innocent.

Who

Who could suspect fair *Leonora's* virtue,
 Till after-proofs conspir'd to blacken it?
 Sad proofs, which came too late; which broke not out
 (Eternal curses on *Alvarez* haste!)
 Till holy rites had made the wanton yours;
 And then, I own, I labour'd to conceal it,
 In duty, and compassion to your peace.

ALONZO.

Live now; be damn'd hereafter; for I want thee.
O night of ecstacy!—Ha! was't not so?
 I will enjoy this murder—Let me think——
 The jess'min bow'r; 'tis secret and remote:
 Go, wait me there, and take thy dagger with thee.

[*Exit Zanga.*

How the sweet sound still rings within my ear!
When shall we meet again? To-night, in hell.

[*As he is going. Enter Leonora.*

Ha! I'm surpriz'd; I stagger at her charms.
 O angel-devil!—Shall I stab her now?
 No, it shall be as I had first determin'd:
 To kill her now were half my vengeance lost.
 Then I must now dissemble—if I can.

LEONORA.

My lord, excuse me; see, a second time
 I come in embassy from all your friends,
 Whose joys are languid, uninspir'd by you.

ALONZO.

This moment, *Leonora*, I was coming
 To thee, and all—But sure, or I mistake,
 Or thou canst well inspire my friends with joy.

LEONORA.

Why sighs, my lord?

ALON-

ALONZO.

I sigh'd not, *Leonora*.

LEONORA.

I thought you did: Your sighs are mine, my lord,
And I shall feel them all.

ALONZO.

Dost flatter me?

LEONORA.

If my regards for you are flattery,
Full far indeed I stretch'd the compliment
In this day's solemn rite.

ALONZO.

What rite?

LEONORA.

You sport me.

ALONZO.

Indeed I do; my heart is full of mirth.

LEONORA.

And so is mine—I look on cheerfulness,
As on the health of virtue.

ALONZO.

Virtue!—Damn——

LEONORA.

What says my lord?

ALONZO.

Thou art exceeding fair.

LEONORA.

Beauty alone is but of little worth;

But when the soul and body of a piece,

Both shine alike; then they obtain a price,

And are a fit reward for gallant actions,

Heav'n's pay on earth for such great souls as yours;

If fair and innocent, I am your due.

ALON-

THE REVENGE.

ALONZO. [*Aside.*]

Innocent !

LEONORA.

How !—My lord, I interrupt you.

ALONZO.

No, my best life ; I must not part with thee ;
 This hand is mine. O ! what a hand is here ?
 So soft, souls sink into it, and are lost !

LEONORA.

In tears, my lord ?

ALONZO.

What less can speak my joy ?

I gaze, and I forgot my own existence ;
 'Tis all a vision ; my head swims in heav'n.
 Wherefore, O ! wherefore, this expence of beauty ?
 And wherefore ? O ! ———

Why, I could gaze upon thy looks for ever,
 And drink in all my being from thine eyes ;
 And I could snatch a flaming thunderbolt,
 And hurl destruction.—

LEONORA.

How, my lord ! What mean you ?

Acquaint me with the secret of your heart,
 Or cast me out for ever from your love.

ALONZO.

Art thou concern'd for me ?

LEONORA.

My lord, you fright me.

Is this the fondness of your nuptial hour ?
 I am ill-us'd, my lord ; I must not bear it.
 Why, when I woo your hand, is it deny'd me ?
 Your very eyes, why are they taught to shun me ?
 Nay, my good lord, I have a title here ; [*Taking his hand.*

And

And I will have it. Am I not your wife?
 Have I not just authority to know
 That heart, which I have purchas'd with my own?
 Lay it before me then; it is my due.
 Unkind *Alonzo*, tho' I might demand it,
 Behold, I kneel! See, *Leonora* kneels,
 And deigns to be a beggar for her own!
 Tell me the secret; I conjure you tell me.
 The bride foregoes the homage of her day;
Alvarez' daughter trembles in the dust:
 Speak then; I charge you speak, or I expire,
 And load you with my death. My lord—my lord!

ALONZO.

Ha! ha! ha! [*He breaks from her, and she sinks upon the floor.*]

LEONORA.

Are these the joys which fondly I conceiv'd?
 And is it thus a wedded life begins?
 What did I part with, when I gave my heart?
 I knew not that all happiness went with it.
 Why did I leave my tender father's wing,
 And venture into love? The maid that loves,
 Goes out to sea upon a shatter'd plank,
 And puts her trust in miracles for safety.
 Where shall I sigh? Where pour out my complaint?
 He that should hear, should succour, should redress,
 He, is the source of all.

ALONZO.

Go to thy chamber;
 I soon will follow: That which now disturbs thee,
 Shall be clear'd up, and thou shalt not condemn me.

[*Exit Leonora.*]

O,

O, how like innocence she looks ! What, stab her,
And rush her into blood ?——I never can !

In her, guilt shines, and nature holds my hand.

How then ? Why thus—No more ; it is determin'd.

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA. [*Aside.*]

I fear his heart has fail'd him. She must die.

Can I not rouse the snake that's in his bosom,

To sting out human nature, and effect it ?

ALONZO.

This vast and solid earth, that blazing sun,

Those skies, thro' which it rolls, must all have end.

What then is man ? The smallest part of nothing.

Day buries day ; month, month ; and year the year :

Our life is but a chain of many deaths.

Can then death's self be fear'd ? Our life much rather !

Life is the desert, life the solitude ;

Death joins us to the great majority :

'Tis to be born to *Plato's* and to *Cæsar* ;

'Tis to be great for ever ;

'Tis pleasure, 'tis ambition, then, to die.

ZANGA.

I think, my lord, you talk'd of death.

ALONZO.

I did.

ZANGA.

I give you joy ; then *Leonora's* dead.

ALONZO.

No, *Zanga*, no ; the greatest guilt is mine :

'Tis mine, who might have mark'd his midnight visit ;

Who might have mark'd his tameness to resign her ;

Who might have mark'd her sudden turn of love :

These

These, and a thousand tokens more; and yet
(For which the saints absolve my soul!) did wed.

ZANGA.
Where does this tend?

ALONZO.

To shed a woman's blood
Would stain my sword, and make my wars inglorious;
But just resentment to myself, bears in it
A stamp of greatness above vulgar minds:
He who, superior to the checks of nature,
Dares make his life the victim of his reason,
Does in some sort that reason deify,
And take a flight at heav'n.

ZANGA.

Alas! my lord,
'Tis not your reason, but her beauty, finds
Those arguments, and throw you on your sword:
You cannot close an eye that is so bright;
You cannot strike a breast that is so soft;
That has ten thousand ecstasies in store——
For *Carlos*?—No, my lord; I mean for you.

ALONZO.

O! thro' my heart and marrow! Pr'ythee spare me;
Nor more upbraid the weakness of thy lord:
I own, I try'd, I quarell'd, with my heart,
And push'd it on, and bid it give her death;
But, O! her eyes struck first, and murder'd me.

ZANGA.

I know not what to answer to my lord.
Men are but men; we did not make ourselves:
Farewel then, my best lord, since you must die.
O that I were to share your monument,

And

168 THE REVENGE.

And in eternal darkness close these eyes
Against those scenes which I am doom'd to suffer!

ALONZO.

What dost thou mean?

ZANGA.

And is it then unknown?

O grief of heart, to think that you should ask it!

Sure you distrust that ardent love I bear you,

Else could you doubt when you are laid in dust——

But it will cut my poor heart thro' and thro' :

To see those revel on your sacred tomb,

Who brought you thither by their lawless loves :

For there they'll revel, and exult to find

Him sleep so fast, who else would marr their joys.

ALONZO.

Distraction!—But Don *Carlos*, well thou know'st,

Is sheath'd in steel, and bent on other thoughts.

ZANGA.

I'll work him to the murder of his friend— [*Aside.*

Yes, till the fever of his blood returns,

While her last kifs still glows upon his cheek.

But when he finds *Alonzo* is no more,

How will he rush, like lightning, to her arms!

There sigh, there languish, there pour out his soul;

But not in grief—sad obsequies to thee——

But thou wilt be at peace, nor see, nor hear,

The burning kifs, the sigh of ecstasy,

Their throbbing hearts that jostle one another :

Thank heav'n, these torments will be all my own.

ALONZO.

I'll ease thee of that pain : Let *Carlos* die :

O'er?

O'ertake him on the road, and see it done.

'Tis my command.

[Gives his signet.

ZANGA.

I dare not disobey.

ALONZO.

My Zanga, now I have thy leave to die.

ZANGA.

Ah, Sir, think, think again. Are all men buried
In Carlos' grave? You know not womankind:
When once the throbbing of the heart has broke
The modest zone, with which it first was ty'd,
Each man she meets will be a Carlos to her.

ALONZO.

That thought has more of hell than had the former;
Another, and another, and another!
And each shall cast a smile upon my tomb!
I am convinc'd; I must not, will not, die.

ZANGA.

You cannot die; nor can you murder her.
What then remains? In nature no third way,
But to forget, and so to love again.

ALONZO.

Oh!

ZANGA.

If you forgive, the world will call you *Good*;
If you forget, the world will call you *Wise*;
If you receive her to your grace again,
The world will call you, *very, very kind*.

ALONZO.

Zanga, I understand thee well. She dies;
Tho' my arm tremble at the stroke, she dies.

ZANGA.

That's truly great. What think you 'twas set up

The *Greek* and *Roman* name in such a lustre,
 But doing right in stern despite to nature,
 Shutting their ears to all her little cries,
 When great, august, and godlike justice call'd ?
 At *Aulis*, one pour'd out a daughter's life,
 And gain'd more glory than by all his wars ;
 Another slew a sister in just rage ;
 A third, the theme of all succeeding times,
 Gave to the cruel ax a darling son :
 Nay more, for justice some devote themselves,
 As he at *Carthage*, an immortal name !
 Yet there is one step left above 'em all,
 Above their history, above their fable,
 A wife, bride, mistress, unenjoy'd—Do That,
 And tread upon the *Greek* and *Roman* glory.

ALONZO.

'Tis done—again new transports fire my brain ;
 I had forgot it ; 'tis my bridal night :
 Friend, give me joy ; we must be gay together :
 See that the festival be duly honour'd.

And when with garlands the full bowl is crown'd,
 And music gives her elevating sound,
 And golden carpets spread the sacred floor,
 And a new day the blazing tapers pour,
 Thou, *Zanga*, then my solemn friends invite,
 From the dark realms of everlasting night ;
 Call vengeance, call the furies, call despair ;
 And death, our chief invited guest, be there ;
 He, with pale hand, shall lead the bride, and spread
 Eternal curtains round our nuptial-bed. [Exeunt.

ACT



ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter ALONZO.

ALONZO.

O Pitiful! O terrible to fight!
 Poor mangled shade, all cover'd o'er with wounds,
 And so disguis'd with blood! Who murder'd thee?
 Tell thy sad tale, and thou shalt be reveng'd.
 Ha! *Carlos*?—Horror! *Carlos*?—O, away!
 Go to thy grave, or let me sink to mine.
 I cannot bear the fight—What fight?—Where am I?
 There's nothing here——If this was fancy's work,
 She draws a picture strongly.——

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA.

Ha!—You're pale.

ALONZO.

Is *Carlos* murder'd?

ZANGA.

I obey'd your order.

Six ruffians overtook him on the road;
 He fought as he was wont, and four he slew;
 Then sunk beneath an hundred wounds to death:
 His last breath blest *Alonzo*, and desir'd
 His bones might rest near yours.

ALONZO.

O *Zanga*! *Zanga*!—

But I'll not think ; for I must act ; and thinking
 Would ruin me for action. O the medley
 Of right and wrong ! the chaos in my brain !
 He should, and should not die—You should obey,
 And not obey——It is a day of darkness,
 Of contradictions, and of many deaths.
 Where's *Leonora* then ? Quick answer me ;
 I'm deep in horrors ; I'll be deeper still.——
 I find, thy artifice did take effect,
 And she forgives my late deportment to her.

ZANGA.

I told her, from your childhood you was wont,
 On any great surprize, but chiefly then,
 When cause of sorrow bore it company,
 To have your passion shake the seat of reason ;
 A momentary ill, which soon blew o'er ;
 Then did I tell her of Don *Carlos*' death ;
 (Wisely suppressing by what means he fell)
 And laid the blame on that. At first she doubted ;
 But such the honest artifice I us'd,
 And such her ardent wish it should be true,
 That she, at length, was fully satisfy'd.

ALONZO.

'Twas well she was. In our late interview,
 My passion so far threw me from my guard,
 (Methinks 'tis strange !) that, conscious of her guilt,
 She saw not, thro' its thin disguise, my heart.

ZANGA.

But what design you, Sir ; and how ?

ALONZO.

I'll tell thee.

Thus I've ordain'd it : In the jess'min bow'r,

A TRAGEDY.

173

The place which she dishonour'd with her guilt;
There will I meet her; the appointment's made;
And calmly spread (for I can do it now)
The blackness of her crime before her sight;
And then, with all the cool solemnity
Of public justice, give her to the grave. [Exit.

ZANGA.

Why, get thee gone! Horror and night go with thee!
Sisters of *Acheron*, go hand in hand;
Go dance around the bow'r, and close them in;
And tell them, that I sent you to salute them!
Prophane the ground; and for th' ambrosial rose,
And breath of jess'min, let hemlock blacken,
And deadly nightshade poison all the air!
For the sweet nightingale, may ravens croak,
Toads pant, and adders rattle thro' the leaves;
May serpents, winding up the trees, let fall
Their hissing necks upon them from above,
And mingle kisses—such as I should give them! [Exit.

SCENE, *The Bower.*

LEONORA *sleeping.* Enter ALONZO.

ALONZO.

YE amaranths! ye roses, like the morn!
Sweet myrtles, and ye golden orange-groves!
Why do you smile? Why do you look so fair?
Are you not blasted as I enter in?
Yes; see how every flow'r lets fall its head!
How shudders every leaf without a wind!
How every green is as the ivy pale!
Did ever midnight ghosts assemble here?

Have these sweet echoes ever learnt to groan ?

Joy-giving, love-inspiring, holy bow'r !

Know, in thy fragrant bosom, thou receiv'st

A—murderer : O ! I shall stain thy lilies,

And horror will usurp the seat of bliss.

So *Lucifer* broke into Paradise,

And soon damnation follow'd. [*He advances.*] Ha ! she

The day's uncommon heat has overcome her :

Then take, my longing eyes, your last full gaze.

O, what a sight is here ! How dreadful fair !

Who would not think that Being innocent ?

Where shall I strike ? Who strikes her, strikes himself.

My own life-blood will issue at her wound.

O my distracted heart !—O cruel heaven !

To give such charms as those, and then call man,

Meer man, to be your executioner.

Was it because it was too hard for you ?

But see, she smiles ! I never shall smile more :

It strongly tempts me to a parting kiss.

[*Going, he starts back.*]

Ha ! smile again ! She dreams of him she loves :

Curse on her charms ! I'll stab her thro' them all.

[*As he is going to strike, she wakes.*]

LEONORA.

My lord, your stay was long ; and yonder lull

Of falling waters tempted me to rest,

Dispirited with noon's excessive heat.

ALONZO.

Ye pow'rs ! with what an eye she mends the day !

While they were clos'd, I should have giv'n the blow.

[*Aside.*]

O for a last embrace ! and then for justice :
Thus heav'n and I shall both be satisfy'd.

LEONORA.
What says my lord ?

ALONZO.
Why This *Alonzo* says :
If love were endless, men were gods ; 'tis that
Does counter-balance travel, danger, pain——
'Tis heav'n's expedient to make mortals bear
The light, and cheat them of the peaceful grave.

LEONORA.
Alas ! my lord, why talk you of the grave ?
Your friend is dead ; in friendship you sustain
A mighty loss ; repair it with my love.

ALONZO.
Thy love ? Thou piece of witchcraft !—I wou'd say,
Thou brightest angel ! I could gaze for ever.
Where hadst thou this ? Enchantress, tell me where ?
Which with a touch works miracles, boils up
My blood to tumults, and turns round my brain !
Ev'n now thou swim'st before me : I shall lose thee :
No, I will make thee sure, and clasp thee all.
Who turn'd this slender waste with so much art,
And shut perfection in so small a ring ?
Who spread that pure expanse of white above,
On which the dazled sight can find no rest ;
But, drunk with beauty, wanders up and down
For ever, and for ever finds new charms ?
But, O those eyes ! those murderers ! O whence,
Whence didst thou steal their burning orbs ? From heav'n ?
Thou didst ; and 'tis religion to adore them.

LEONORA.

My best *Alonzo*, moderate your thought;
Extremes still fright me, tho' of love itself.

ALONZO.

Extremes indeed! It hurried me away;
But I come home again—and now for justice—
And now for death—it is impossible——
Sure such were made by heav'n guiltless to sin,
Or in their guilt to laugh at punishment. [*Aside.*
I leave her to just heav'n. [*Drops the dagger, and goes off.*

LEONORA.

Ha! a dagger!

What dost thou say, thou minister of death?
What dreadful tale dost tell me? Let me think.

*Enter ZANGA.*ZANGA. [*Aside.*]

Death to my tow'ring hope! O falls from high!
My close long-labour'd scheme at once is blasted.
That dagger found will cause her to enquire;
Enquiry will discover all; my hopes
Of vengeance perish; I myself am lost——
Curse on the coward's heart! wither his hand,
Which held the steel in vain!—What can be done?—
Where can I fix?—That's something still—'twill breed
Fell rage and bitterness betwixt their souls,
Which may perchance grow up to greater evil;
If not, 'tis all I can——It shall be so——

LEONORA.

O *Zanga*! I am sinking in my fears!
Alonzo dropt this dagger as he left me;
And left me in a strange disorder too.
What can this mean? Angels preserve his life!

ZAN-

A TRAGEDY.

177

ZANGA.

Yours, Madam; yours.

LEONORA.

What, Zanga, dost thou say?

ZANGA.

Carry your goodness then to such extremes,

So blinded to the faults of him you love,

That you perceive not he is jealous?

LEONORA.

Heav'ns!

And yet a thousand things recur that swear it.

What villain could inspire him with that thought?

It is not of the growth of his own nature.

ZANGA.

Some villain; who, hell knows; but he is jealous;

And 'tis most fit a heart so pure as yours

Do itself justice, and assert its honour,

And make him conscious of his stab to virtue.

LEONORA.

Jealous! it sickens at my heart. Unkind,

Ungenerous, groundless, weak, and insolent!

Why? Wherefore? On what shadow of occasion?

'Tis fascination; 'tis the wrath of heav'n

For the collected crimes of all his race.

O how the great man lessens to my thought!

How could so mean a vice as jealousy,

Unnatural child of ignorance and guilt,

Which tears and feeds upon its parent's heart,

Live in a throng of such exalted virtues?

I scorn and hate—yet love him, and adore:

I cannot, will not, dare not, think it true,

Till from himself I know it.

[Exit]

I 5

ZANGA.

ZANGA.

This succeeds

Just to my wish. Now she with violence
 Upbraids him; he, not doubting she is guilty,
 Rages no less; and if on either side
 The waves run high, there still lives hope of ruin.

[Enter Alonzo.

My lord.——

ALONZO.

O *Zanga*! hold thy peace; I am no coward;
 But heav'n itself did hold my hand; I felt it;
 By the well-being of my soul, I did:
 I'll think of vengeance at another season.

ZANGA.

My lord, her guilt——

ALONZO.

Perdition on thee, *Moor*,
 For that one word! Ah! do not rouse that thought;
 I have o'erwhelm'd it much as possible:
 Away then; let us talk of other things:
 I tell thee, *Moor*, I love her to distraction:
 If 'tis my shame, why be it so——I love her;
 Nor can I help it; 'tis impos'd upon me
 By some superior and resistless pow'r:
 I could not hurt her to be lord of earth;
 It shocks my nature like a stroke at heav'n.
 Angels defend her, as if innocent!
 But see, my *Leonora* comes:——Be gone. [Ex. Zanga.

[Enter Leonora.

O seen for ever! yet for ever new!
 The conquer'd thou dost conquer o'er again,
 Inflicting wound on wound.

LEO-

LEONORA.

Alas, my lord!

What need of this to me?

ALONZO.

Ha! dost thou weep?

LEONORA.

Have I no cause?

ALONZO.

If love is thy concern,

Thou hast no cause; none ever lov'd like me.

But wherefore this? Is it to break my heart,

Which loses so much blood for every tear?

LEONORA.

Is it so tender?

ALONZO.

Is it not? O heav'n!

Doubt of my love? Why, I am nothing else;

It quite absorbs my every other passion.

O that this one embrace would last for ever!

LEONORA.

Could this man ever mean to wrong my virtue?

Could this man e'er design upon my life?

Impossible! I throw away the thought.

[Aside.

These tears declare how much I taste the joy

Of being folded in your arms and heart;

My universe does lie within that space.

This dagger bore false witness.

[Showing it.

ALONZO.

Ha! my dagger?

It rouses horrid images: Away,

Away with it, and let us talk of Love,

Plunge ourselves deep into the sweet illusion,

And hide us there from every other thought.

LEONORA.

It touches you.

ALONZO.

Let's talk of Love.

LEONORA.

Of Death.

ALONZO.

As thou lov'st happiness—

LEONORA.

Of Murder.

ALONZO.

Rash,

Rash woman, yet forbear.

LEONORA.

Approve my wrongs!

ALONZO.

Then must I fly, for thy sake and my own.

LEONORA.

Nay, by my injuries, you first must hear me:

Stab me, then think it much to hear me groan.

ALONZO.

Heav'ns, strike me deaf!

LEONORA.

It well may sting you home.

ALONZO.

Alas! thou quite mistak'st my cause of pain.

Yet, yet dismiss me; I am all in flames.

LEONORA.

Who has most cause? You, or myself? What act

Of my whole life encourag'd you to this?

Or of your own, what guilt has drawn it on you?

You find me kind, and think me kind to all;

The weak, ungenerous error of your sex.

What could inspire the thought? We oft'nest judge

From

From our own hearts ; and is your's then so frail,
It prompts you to conceive thus ill of me ?

He that can stoop to harbour such a thought,

Deserves to find it true.

[Holding him.

ALONZO.

O sex, sex, sex ! [Turning on her.

The language of you all. Ill-fated woman !

Why hast thou forc'd me back into the gulph

Of agonies, I had block'd up from thought ?

I know the cause ; thou saw'st me impotent

E'er while to hurt thee, therefore thou turn'st on me ;

But, by the pangs I suffer, to thy woe :

For, since thou hast replung'd me in my torture,

I will be satisfy'd !

LEONORA.

Be satisfy'd !

ALONZO.

Yes ; thy own mouth shall witness it against thee :

I will be satisfy'd.

LEONORA.

Of what ?

ALONZO.

Of what ?

How dar'st thou ask that question ? Woman, Woman,

Weak, and assur'd at once ; thus 'tis for ever.

Who told thee that thy virtue was suspected ?

Who told thee I design'd upon thy life ?

You found the dagger ; but that could not speak ;

Nor did I tell thee : Who did tell thee then ?

Guilt, conscious guilt.

LEONORA.

This to my face ? O heav'n !

ALON-

ALONZO.

This to thy very foul.

LEONORA.

Thou'rt not in earnest?

ALONZO.

Serious as death.

LEONORA.

Then heav'n have mercy on thee.

Till now, I struggled not to think it true;

I sought conviction, and would not believe it:

And dost thou force me? This shall not be borne:

Thou shalt repent this insult. [Going.]

ALONZO.

Madam, stay:

Your passion's wife; 'tis a disguise for guilt:

'Tis my turn now to fix you here awhile;

You, and your thousand arts, shall not escape me.

LEONORA.

Arts?

ALONZO.

Arts! Confess; for death is in my hand.

LEONORA.

'Tis in your words.

ALONZO.

Confess, confess, confess;

Nor tear my veins with passion to compel thee.

LEONORA.

I scorn to answer thee, presumptuous man!

ALONZO.

Deny then, and incur a fouler shame.

Where did I find this picture?

LEONORA.

Ha! Don Carlos?

By my best hopes, more welcome than thy own.

ALON-

ALONZO.

I know it; but is vice so very rank,
That thou should'st dare to dash it in my face?
Nature is sick of thee, abandon'd woman!

LEONORA.

Repent.

ALONZO.

Is that for me?

LEONORA.

Fall, ask my pardon.

ALONZO.

Astonishment!

LEONORA.

Dar'st thou persist to think I am dishonest?

ALONZO.

I know thee so.

LEONORA.

This blow then to thy heart——

[She stabs herself, he endeavouring to prevent her.]

ALONZO.

Ho! Zanga! Isabella! Ho! She bleeds!

Descend, ye blessed angels, to assist her!

LEONORA.

This is the only way I would wound thee,

Tho' most unjust. Now think me guilty still.

Enter ISABELLA.

ALONZO.

Bear her to instant help: The world to save her!

LEONORA.

Unhappy man! well may'st thou gaze and tremble;

But fix thy terror and amazement right;

Not on my blood, but on thy own distraction.

What hast thou done? Whom censur'd?—*Leonora.*

When

When thou hadst censur'd, thou would'st save her life ;
 O inconsistent ! Should I live in shame,
 Or stoop to any other means but this,
 T' assert my virtue ? No ; she who disputes,
 Admits it possible she might be guilty :
 While aught but truth could be my inducement to it,
 While it might look like an excuse to thee,
 I scorn'd to vindicate my innocence ;
 But now, I let thy rashness know, the wound
 Which least I feel, is that my dagger made.

[Isabella leads out Leonora.]

ALONZO.

Ha ! Was this woman guilty ?—and if not——
 How my thought darkens that way ! Grant, kind heaven,
 That she prove guilty, or give Being end.
 Is that my hope then ?—Sure, the sacred dust
 Of her that bore me trembles in its urn.

Is it in man the sore distress to bear,
 When hope itself is blacken'd to despair ?
 When all the bliss I pant for, is to gain
 In hell a refuge from severer pain ? *[Exit Alon.]*

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA.

How stands the great account 'twixt me and vengeance ?
 Tho' much is paid, yet still it owes me much ;
 And I will not abate a single groan.——
 Ha ! that were well—but that were fatal too——
 Why be it so—Revenge so truly great
 Would come too cheap, if bought with less than life.
 Come death, come hell, then ; 'tis resolv'd ; 'tis done.

Enter

A TRAGEDY.

185

Enter ISABELLA.

ISABELLA.

Ah! Zanga, see me tremble: Has not yet
Thy cruel heart its fill?—Poor *Leonora*—

ZANGA.

Welters in blood, and gasps for her last breath:
What then? We all must die.

ISABELLA.

Alonzo raves;

And in the tempest of his grief, has thrice
Attempted on his life: At length, disarm'd,
He calls his friends that save him, his worst foes,
And importunes the skies for swift perdition.
Thus in his storm of sorrow. After pause,
He started up, and call'd aloud for Zanga;
For Zanga rav'd; and, see, he seeks you here,
To learn that truth, which most he dreads to know.

ZANGA.

Be gone. Now, now, my soul, consummate all.

[Exit Isabella.]

Enter ALONZO.

ALONZO.

O Zanga!

ZANGA.

Do not tremble so; but speak.

ALONZO.

I dare not.

[Falls on him.]

ZANGA.

You will drown me with your tears.

ALONZO.

Have I not cause?

ZANGA.

As yet, you have no cause.

ALON-

ALONZO.

Dost thou too rave ?

ZANGA.

Your anguish is to come :

You much have been abus'd.

ALONZO.

Abus'd ! By whom ?

ZANGA.

To know, were little comfort.

ALONZO.

O ! 'twere much.

ZANGA.

Indeed !

ALONZO.

By heav'n. O give him to my fury !

ZANGA.

Born for your use, I live but to oblige you :

Know then, 'twas——I.

ALONZO.

Am I awake ?

ZANGA.

For ever.

Thy wife is guiltless ; that's one transport to me ;

And I, I let thee know it ; that's another :

I urg'd Don Carlos to resign his mistress ;

I forg'd the Letter ; I dispos'd the Picture ;

I hated ; I despis'd ; and I destroy.

ALONZO.

Oh !

[Swoons.]

ZANGA.

Why, this is well—why, this is blow for blow.

Where are you ? Crown me, shadow me, with laurels,

Ye spirits, which delight in just Revenge :

Let Europe, and her pallid sons, go weep ;

Let

Let *Africk*, and her hundred thrones, rejoice.

O my dear countrymen ! look down, and see

How I bestride your prostrate conqueror !

I tread on haughty *Spain*, and all her kings :

But this is mercy ; this is my indulgence ;

'Tis peace ; 'tis refuge, from my indignation :

I must awake him into horrors. Ho !

Alonzo, ho ! the *Moor* is at the gate ;

Awake, Invincible, Omnipotent !

Thou who dost all subdue.

ALONZO.

Inhuman slave !

ZANGA.

Fall'n Christian, thou mistak'st my character.

Look on me. Who am I ? I know, thou say'st

The *Moor*, a slave, an abject, *beaten* slave

(Eternal woes to him that made me so !):

But look again. Has six years cruel bondage

Extinguish'd majesty so far, that nought

Shines here, to give an awe of one above thee ?

When the great *Moorish* king, *Abdella*, fell,

Fell by thy hand accurs'd, I fought fast by him ;

His son, tho', thro' his fondness, in disguise,

Less to expose me to th' ambitious foe.

Ha ! Does it wake thee ? O'er my father's corse

I stood astride, till I had clove thy crest ;

And then was made the captive of a squadron,

And sunk into thy servant—But O ! What,

What were my wages ? Hear not heav'n, nor earth !

My wages were a *blow* ;—by heav'n, a *blow* ;

And from a mortal hand.

ALON-

ALONZO.

O villain! villain!

ZANGA. [*Shewing a dagger.*]

All strife is vain.

ALONZO.

Is thus my love return'd?

Is this my recompence? Make friends of tigers!

Lay not your young, O mothers, on the breast,

For fear they turn to serpents as they lie,

And pay you for their nourishment with death.

Carlos is dead, and *Leonora* dying;

Both innocent, both murder'd, both by me:

That heav'nly maid, which should have liv'd for ever,

At least have gently slept her soul away;

Whose life should have shut up as evening flow'rs

At the departing sun—was murder'd! murder'd!

O shame! O guilt! O horror! O remorse!

O punishment! Had Satan never fell,

Hell had been made for me—O *Leonora*!

ZANGA.

Must I despise thee too, as well as hate thee?

Complain of grief, complain thou art a man.

Priam from fortune's lofty summit fell;Great *Alexander* 'midst his conquests mourn'd;

Heroes and demi-gods have known their sorrows;

Cæsars have wept; and I have had—my blow:

But 'tis reveng'd; and now my work is done:

Yet, e'er I fall, be it one part of vengeance,

To make ev'n *thee* confess that I am just:

Thou seest a prince, whose father thou hast slain;

Whose native country thou hast laid in blood;

Whose sacred person, oh! thou hast prophan'd;

Whose

Whose reign extinguish'd : What was left to me
 So highly born ? No kingdom, but Revenge ;
 No treasure, but thy tortures, and thy groans.
 If men should ask who brought thee to thy end,
 Tell them the *Moor*, and they will not despise thee :
 If cold white mortals censure this great deed,
 Warn them, they judge not of superior beings,
 Souls made of fire, and children of the sun,
 With whom Revenge is virtue. Fare thee well——
 Now, fully satisfy'd, I should take leave ;
 But one thing grieves me ; since thy death is near,
 I leave thee my example how to die.

As he is going to stab himself, Alonzo rushes upon him to prevent him. In the mean time, Enter Alvarez, attended. They disarm and seize Zanga. Alonzo puts the dagger in his bosom.

ALONZO.

No, monster, thou shalt not escape by death.

O father !

ALVAREZ.

O Alonzo ! —— *Isabella,*

Touch'd with remorse to see her mistress' pangs,

Told all the dreadful tale.

ALONZO.

What groan was that ?

ZANGA.

As I have been a vultur to thy heart,

So will I be a raven to thine ear,

And true as ever snuff'd the scent of blood,

As ever flap't its heavy wing against

The window of the sick, and croak'd despair :

Thy wife is dead.

[Alvarez goes to the side of the stage, and returns,

AL-

ALVAREZ.

The dreadful news is true.

ALONZO.

Prepare the rack ; invent new torments for him.

ZANGA.

This too is well. The fix'd and noble mind

Turns all occurrence to its own advantage,

And I'll make vengeance of calamity.

Were I not thus reduc'd, thou would'st not know,

That, thus reduc'd, I dare defy thee still :

Torture thou may'st ; but thou shalt ne'er despise me :

The blood will follow, where the knife is driven ;

The flesh will quiver, where the pincers tear ;

And sighs and cries by nature grow on pain :

But these are foreign to the soul : Not mine

The groans that issue, or the tears that fall ;

They disobey me ; on the rack I scorn thee,

As when my fauchion clove thy helm in battle.

ALVAREZ.

Peace, villain !

ZANGA.

While I live, old man, I'll speak ;

And, well I know, thou dar'st not kill me yet ;

For that would rob thy blood-hounds of their prey.

ALONZO.

Who call'd *Alonzo* ?

ALVAREZ.

No one call'd, my son.

ALONZO.

Again !—'tis *Carlos*' voice, and I obey.O how I laugh at all that this can do ! [*Shewing the dagger.*]

The wounds that pain'd, the wounds that murder'd me,

Were giv'n before ; I am already dead ;

This

A TRAGEDY. 191

This only marks my body for the grave. [*Stabs himself.*]
Africk, thou art reveng'd—O *Leonora*!— [*Dies.*]

ZANGA.

Good ruffians, give me leave; my blood is yours;
 The wheel's prepar'd, and you shall have it all;
 Let me but look one moment on the dead,
 And pay yourselves with gazing on my pangs.

[*He goes to Alonzo's body.*]

Is this *Alonzo*? Where's the haughty mien?
 Is that the hand which smote me? Heav'n's, how pale!
 And art thou dead? So is my enmity:
 I war not with the dust: The great, the proud,
 The conqueror of *Africk*, was my foe.
 A lion preys not upon carcases.
 This was the only method to subdue me:
 Terror and doubt fall on me; all thy good
 Now blazes: all thy guilt is in the grave:
 Never had man such funeral applause;
 If I lament thee, sure thy worth was great.
 O vengeance! I have follow'd thee too far,
 And to receive me hell blows all her fires. [*He is borne off.*]

ALVAREZ.

Dreadful effect of jealousy! a rage
 In which the wife with caution will engage;
 Reluctant long, and tardy to believe,
 Where, sway'd by nature, we ourselves deceive;
 Where our own folly joins the villain's art,
 And each man finds a *Zanga* in his heart. [*Exeunt.*]

E P I.



EPILOGUE.

By a FRIEND.

OUR Author sent me, in an humble strain,
 To beg you'd bless the offspring of his brain;
 And I, your proxy, promis'd, in your name,
 The Child should live, at least, Six days of fame:
 I like the Brat; but still his faults can find;
 And, by the Parent's leave, will speak my mind.
 Gallants, pray tell me, do you think 'twas well,
 To let a willing maid lead apes in hell?
 You, nicer Ladies, should you think it right
 To eat no Supper——on your Wedding-night?
 Shou'd English Husbands dare to starve their Wives,
 Be sure, they'd lead most comfortable lives.
 But he loves mischief, and, with groundless fears,
 Wou'd fain set loving couples by the ears;
 Wou'd spoil the tender husbands of our nation,
 By teaching them his vile outlandish fashion:
 But we've been taught, in our good-natur'd clime,
 That Jealousy, tho' just, is still a crime,
 And will be still; for, (not to blame the plot)
 That same Alonzo was a stupid sot,
 To kill a bride, a mistress unenjoy'd;
 'Twere some excuse, had the poor man been cloy'd:

*To kill her on suspicion, ere he knew
Whether the heinous crime were false or true.—
The priest said grace; she met him in the bower,
In hopes she might anticipate an hour:—
Love was her errand, but the hot-brain'd Spaniard,
Instead of Love—produc'd—a filthy Poniard:—
Had he been wise, at this their private meeting,
The proof o' th' Pudden had been in the Eating:
Madam had then been pleas'd, and Don contented,
And all this blood and murder been prevented.
Britons, be wise, and, from this sad example,
Ne'er break a Bargain, but first take a Sample.*



The first of these is the fact that the world is not what it was. It is not the same world that we knew in the days of our youth. It is a world that is changing and growing, and we must learn to live with it as it is, not as it was.

The second of these is the fact that the world is not what we thought it was. We thought it was a world of peace and harmony, but it is a world of war and strife. We thought it was a world of freedom and justice, but it is a world of oppression and injustice. We must learn to live with it as it is, not as we thought it was.

The third of these is the fact that the world is not what we hoped it was. We hoped it was a world of progress and civilization, but it is a world of backwardness and barbarism. We hoped it was a world of science and knowledge, but it is a world of superstition and ignorance. We must learn to live with it as it is, not as we hoped it was.

The fourth of these is the fact that the world is not what we feared it was. We feared it was a world of chaos and confusion, but it is a world of order and harmony. We feared it was a world of darkness and despair, but it is a world of light and hope. We must learn to live with it as it is, not as we feared it was.

The fifth of these is the fact that the world is not what we dreamed it was. We dreamed it was a world of perfection and bliss, but it is a world of imperfection and pain. We dreamed it was a world of eternal life, but it is a world of death and decay. We must learn to live with it as it is, not as we dreamed it was.

The sixth of these is the fact that the world is not what we believed it was. We believed it was a world of truth and reality, but it is a world of illusion and fantasy. We believed it was a world of meaning and purpose, but it is a world of emptiness and meaninglessness. We must learn to live with it as it is, not as we believed it was.

The seventh of these is the fact that the world is not what we wished it was. We wished it was a world of peace and harmony, but it is a world of war and strife. We wished it was a world of freedom and justice, but it is a world of oppression and injustice. We must learn to live with it as it is, not as we wished it was.

The eighth of these is the fact that the world is not what we wanted it to be. We wanted it to be a world of peace and harmony, but it is a world of war and strife. We wanted it to be a world of freedom and justice, but it is a world of oppression and injustice. We must learn to live with it as it is, not as we wanted it to be.

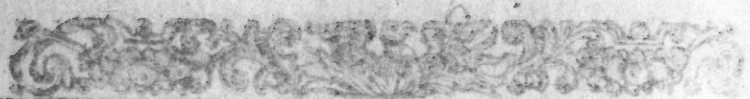
PROLOGUE

THE
BROTHERS.

A
TRAGEDY.

ACTED at the
THEATRE-ROYAL in DRURY-LANE,

By His MAJESTY's Servants.



PROLOGUE
THE
BROTHERS.

TRAGEDY.

THEATRE-ROYAL in GREAT-BRITAIN.
By Mr. [illegible] and Mr. [illegible].
As performed at the Theatre-royal, in Great-Britain.
By Mr. [illegible] and Mr. [illegible].

By Mr. [illegible] and Mr. [illegible].
As performed at the Theatre-royal, in Great-Britain.
By Mr. [illegible] and Mr. [illegible].



PROLOGUE,

Written by Mr. DODSLEY,

And spoken by Mr. HAVARD.

THE Tragic muse, revolving many a page
 Of time's long records drawn from every age,
 Forms not her plans on low or trivial deeds,
 But marks the striking!—When some Hero bleeds
 To save his Country, then her powers inspire,
 And souls congenial catch the patriot fire.——
 When bold oppression grinds a suffering land;
 When the keen dagger gleams in murder's hand;
 When black conspiracy infects the throng;
 Or fell revenge sits brooding o'er his wrong;
 Then walks she forth in terror; at her frown
 Guilt shrinks appall'd, tho' seated on a throne.
 But the rack'd soul, when dark suspicions rend;
 When Brothers hate, and Sons with Sires contend;
 When clashing interests war eternal wage;
 And Love, the tenderest passion, turns to Rage;
 Then grief on every visage stands impress,
 And pity throbs in every feeling breast;
 Hope, Fear, and Indignation, rise by turns,
 And the strong scene with various passion burns.

*Such is our tale:—Nor blush, if tears should flow;
 They're virtue's tribute paid to human woe;
 Such drops new lustre to bright eyes impart;
 The silent witness of a tender heart:
 Such drops adorn the noblest Hero's cheek,
 And paint his worth, in strokes that more than speak:
 Not he who cannot weep, but he who can,
 Shows the great soul, and proves himself a Man.*

*Yet do not idly grieve at others pain,
 Nor let the tears of nature fall in vain:
 Watch the close crimes from whence their ills have grown,
 And from their frailties learn to mend your own.*



Dramatis

1850

O

THE NEW YORK

2402 R E

BROTHERS

Mr. James
Mr. John
Mr. William
Mr. Charles
Mr. George
Mr. Henry
Mr. Thomas
Mr. Robert
Mr. David
Mr. Richard
Mr. Benjamin
Mr. Samuel
Mr. Joseph
Mr. Daniel
Mr. Matthew
Mr. Patrick
Mr. Michael
Mr. James
Mr. John
Mr. William
Mr. Charles
Mr. George
Mr. Henry
Mr. Thomas
Mr. Robert
Mr. David
Mr. Richard
Mr. Benjamin
Mr. Samuel
Mr. Joseph
Mr. Daniel
Mr. Matthew
Mr. Patrick
Mr. Michael

W. O. B. & C.
Printed and Published by
W. O. B. & C.
No. 2402 R E

THE NEW YORK
BROTHERS
2402 R E



PERSONS.

MEN.

PHILIP, King of <i>Macedon</i> ,	Mr. BERRY.
PERSEUS, his elder Son,	Mr. MOSSOP.
DEMETRIUS, his younger Son,	Mr. GARRICK.
PERICLES, the Friend of PERSEUS,	Mr. BLAKES.
ANTIGONUS, a Minister of State,	Mr. BURTON.
DYMAS, the King's Favorite,	Mr. SIMSON.
POSTHUMIUS, } <i>Roman Ambassa-</i>	Mr. WINSTONE.
CURTIUS, } <i>dors,</i>	Mr. MOZEEN.

WOMEN.

ERIXENE, the <i>Thracian</i> Princess,	Mrs. BELLAMY.
Her Attendant,	Miss HIPPISELY.

THE



THE
BROTHERS.

A
TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter CURTIUS and POSTHUMIUS.

CURTIUS.

THERE's something of magnificence about us
I have not seen at *Rome*. But you can tell me.

[Gazes round.]

POSTHUMIUS.

True: Hither sent on former embassies,

I know this splendid court of *Macedon*,

And haughty *Philip*, well.

CURTIUS.

His pride presumes
To treat us here like subjects, more than *Romans*;
More than ambassadors, who, in our bosoms,

202 THE BROTHERS.

Bear peace and war, and throw him which we please,
As *Yove* his storm, or sunshine, on his creatures.

POSTHUMIUS.

This *Philip* only, since *Rome's* glory rose,
Preserves its grandeur to the name of king ;
Like a bold star, that shews its fires by day.
The *Greek*, who won the world, was sent before him
As the grey dawn before the blaze of noon :
Philip had ne'er been conquer'd, but by *Rome* ;
And what can fame say more of mortal man ?

CURTIUS.

I know his public character.

POSTHUMIUS.

It pains me
To turn my thought on his domestic state :
There *Philip* is no God ; but pours his heart,
In ceaseless groans, o'er his contending sons ;
And pays the secret tax of mighty men
To their mortality.

CURTIUS.

But whence the strife,
Which thus afflicts him ?

POSTHUMIUS.

From this *Philip's* bed
Two *Alexanders* spring.

CURTIUS.

And but one world ?
"Twill never do.

POSTHUMIUS.

They both are bright ; but one
Benignly bright, as stars to mariners ;

And

And one a comet, with malignant blaze,
Denouncing ruin.

CURTIVS.

You mean *Perseus*.

POSTHUMIVS.

True.

The younger son *Demetrius*, you well know,
Was bred at *Rome*, our hostage from his father.
Soon after, he was sent ambassador,
When *Philip* fear'd the thunder of our arms.
Rome's manners won him, and his manners *Rome*;
Who granted peace, declaring she forgave,
To his high worth, the conduct of his father.
This gave him all the hearts of *Macedon*;
Which, join'd to his high patronage from *Rome*,
Inflames his jealous brother.

CURTIVS.

Glow there not

A second brand of enmity?

POSTHUMIVS.

O, yes;

The fair *Erixene*.

CURTIVS.

I've partly heard

Her smother'd story.

POSTHUMIVS.

Smother'd by the king;

And wisely too. But thou shalt hear it all.
Not seals of adamant, nor mountains whelm'd
On guilty secrets, can exclude the day.
Long burnt a fixt hereditary hate,
Between the crowns of *Macedon* and *Thrace*;

204 THE BROTHERS.

The sword by both too much indulg'd in blood.
Philip, at length, prevail'd; he took, by night,
 The town, and palace, of his deadly foe;
 Rush'd thro' the flames, which he had kindled round,
 And slew him, bold in vain: Nor rested there;
 But, with unkingly cruelty, destroy'd
 Two little sons within their mother's arms;
 Thus meaning to tread out those sparks of war,
 Which might one day flame up to strong revenge.
 The queen, thro' grief, on her dead sons expir'd.
 One child alone surviv'd: A female infant,
 Amid these horrors, in the cradle smil'd.

CURTIVS.

What of that infant?

POSTHUMIVS.

Stung with sharp remorse,
 The victor took, and gave her to his queen.
 The child was bred, and honour'd, as her own;
 She grew, she bloom'd; and now her eyes repay
 Her brother's wounds on *Philip's* rival sons.

CURTIVS.

Is then *Erixene* that *Thracian* child?
 How just the Gods! from out that ruin'd house
 He took a brand, to set his own on fire.

POSTHUMIVS.

To give thee, friend, the whole in miniature;
 This is the picture of great *Philip's* court:
 The proud, but melancholy king, on high,
 Majestic sits, like *Jove* enthron'd in darkness;
 His sons are as the thunder in his hand;

And

And the fair *Thracian* princess is a star,
That sparkles by, and gilds the solemn scene.

[*Shouts heard.*]

'Tis their great day, supreme of all their year,
The fam'd Lustration of their martial powers;
Thence, for our audience, chosen by the king,
If he provokes a war, his empire shakes,
And all her lofty glories nod to ruin.

CURTIVS.

Who comes?

POSTHUMIVS.

O, that's the jealous elder brother;
Irregular in manners, as in form.
Observe the fire, high birth, and empire, kindle!

CURTIVS.

He holds his conference with much emotion.

POSTHUMIVS.

The brothers both can talk, and, in their turns,
Have borne away the prize of eloquence
At *Athens*. Shun his walk: Our own debate
Is now at hand. We'll seek his lion Sire,
Who dares to frown on us, his conquerors;
And carries so much monarch on his brow,
As if he'd fright us with the wounds we gave him.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter PERSEVS and PERICLES.

PERSEVS.

'Tis empire! empire! empire! let that word
Make sacred all I do, or can attempt!
Had I been born a slave, I should affect it:
My nature's fiery, and, of course, aspires.

Who

206 THE BROTHERS.

Who gives an empire, by the gift defeats
All end of giving; and procures contempt
Instead of gratitude. An empire lost,
Destroy'd, would less confound me, than resign'd.

PERICLES.

But are you sure *Demetrius* will attempt?

PERSEUS.

Why does *Rome* court him? For his virtues? No:
To fire him to dominion: To blow up
A civil war; then to support him in it:
He gains the name of king, and *Rome* the power.

PERICLES.

This is indeed the common art of *Rome*.

PERSEUS.

That source of justice thro' the wond'ring world:
His youth and valour second *Rome's* designs:
The first impels him to presumptuous hope;
The last supports him in it. Then his person!
Thy hand, O nature, has made bold with mine.
Yet more; what words distil from his red lip,
To gull the multitude! and they make kings.
Ten thousand fools, knaves, cowards, lump'd together,
Become all-wise, all-righteous, and almighty.
Nor is this all: The foolish *Thracian* maid
Prefers the boy to me.

PERICLES.

And does that pain you?

PERSEUS.

O *Pericles*, to death. It is most true,
Thro' hate to him, and not thro' love for her,
I paid my first addresses; but became

The

The fool I feign'd : My sighs are now sincere.
It smarts ; it burns : O that 'twere fiction still !
By heaven, she seems more beauteous than dominion.

PERICLES.

Dominion, and the princess, both are lost,
Unless you gain the king.

PERSEUS.

But how to gain him ?
Old men love novelties ; the last arriv'd
Still pleases best ; the youngest steals their smiles.

PERICLES.

Dymas alone can work him to his pleasure ;
First in esteem, and keeper of his heart.

PERSEUS.

To *Dymas* thou ; and win him to thy will.
In the mean time, I'll seek my double rival ;
Curb his presumption, and erect myself,
In all the dignity of birth, before him.
Whate'er can stir the blood, or sway the mind,
Is now at stake ; and double is the loss,
When an inferior bears away the prize.

PERICLES.

Your brother, dress'd for the solemnity.

PERSEUS.

To *Dymas* fly ! gain him, and think on this :
A prince indebted, is a fortune made.

[Exit Pericles.

Enter DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

How, brother ! unattir'd ! Have you forgot
What pomps are due to this illustrious day ?

PER.

208 THE BROTHERS.

PERSEUS.

I am no gewgaw, for the throng to gaze at:
Some are design'd by nature but for show;
The tinsel and the feather of mankind.

DEMETRIUS.

Brother, of that no more: For shame, gird on
Your glitt'ring arms, and look like any *Roman*.

PERSEUS.

No, brother; let the *Romans* look like me,
If they're ambitious.—But, I pr'ythee, stand;
Let me gaze on thee:—No inglorious figure!
More Romano, as it ought to be.
But what is this that dazzles my weak sight?
There's sunshine in thy beaver.

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis that helmet
Which *Alexander* wore at *Granicus*.

PERSEUS.

When he subdu'd the world? Ha! is't not so?
What world hast thou subdu'd? O, yes; the Fair.
Think'st thou there could in *Macedon* be found
No brow might suit that golden blaze, but thine?

DEMETRIUS.

I wore it but to grace this sacred day:
Jar not for trifles.

PERSEUS.

Nothing is a trifle
That argues the presumption of the soul.

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis they presume, who know not to deserve.

PERSEUS.

Or who, deserving, scorn superior merit.

DEME-

DEMETRIUS.

Who combats with a brother, wounds himself :
Wave private wrath, and rush upon the foes
Of Macedonia.

PERSEUS.

No; I would not wound
Demetrius' friends.

DEMETRIUS.

Demetrius' friends!

PERSEUS.

The Romans.

You copy *Hannibal*, our great ally?
Say, at what altar was you sworn their foe?
Peace-making brother! Wherefore bring you peace,
But to prevent my glory from the field?
The peace you bring, was meant as war to me.

DEMETRIUS.

Perseus, be bold when danger's all your own :
War now, were war with *Philip* more than *Rome*.

PERSEUS.

Come, you love peace; that fair cheek hates a scar :
You that admire the *Romans*, break the bridge
With *Cocles*, or with *Curtius* leap the gulph ;
And league not with the vices of our foes.

DEMETRIUS.

What vices?

PERSEUS.

With their women, and their wits.
Your idol *Laelius* ; *Laelius* the polite.
I hear, Sir, you take wing, and mount in metre.
Terence has own'd your aid, your comrade *Terence*.
God-like ambition! *Terence* there, the slave!

DEMETRIUS.

At *Athens* bred, and to the arts a foe?

PER-

210 THE BROTHERS.

PERSEUS.

At *Athens* bred, and borrow arts from *Rome*?

DEMETRIUS.

Brother, I've done : Let our contention cease :
Our mother shudders at it in her grave :
And how has *Philip* mourn'd ? A dreadful foe,
And awful king ; but, O, the tend'rest parent
That ever wept in fondness o'er a child !

PERSEUS.

Why, ay ; go tell your father ; fondly throw
Your arms around him ; stroke him to your purpose ;
As you are wont : I boast not so much worth ;
I am no picture, by the doating eye
To be survey'd, and hung about his neck ;
I fight his battles ; that's all I can do.
But if you boast a piety sincere,
One way you may secure your father's peace ;
And one alone—Resign *Erixene*.

DEMETRIUS.

You flatter me, to think her in my power.
We run our fates together ; you deserve,
And she can judge ; proceed we then like friends ;
And he who gains her heart, and gains it fairly,
Let him enjoy his gen'rous rival's too.

PERSEUS.

Smooth-speaking, insincere, insulting boy !
Is then my crown usurpt but half thy crime ?
Desist, or, by the gods that smile on blood !
Not thy fine form, nor yet thy boasted peace,
Nor patronizing *Rome*, nor *Philip's* tears,
Nor *Alexander's* helmet ; no, nor, more,
His radiant form, should it alight in thunder,

And

And spread its new divinity between us,
Should save a brother from a brother's fury. [*Exit Per.*]

DEMETRIUS.

How's this? The waves ne'er ran thus high before.
Resign thee! yes, *Erixene*, with life!
Thou in whose eye, so modest, and so bright,
Love ever wakes, and keeps a vestal fire,
Ne'er shall I wean my fond, fond heart from thee.
But *Perseus* warns me to rouse all my powers.
As yet I float in dark uncertainty;
For, tho' she smiles, I found not her designs:
I'll fly, fall, tremble, weep upon her feet,
And learn (O all ye gods!) my final doom!
My father! Ha! and on his brow deep thought,
And pale concern! Kind heav'n, assuage his sorrows,
Which strike a damp thro' all my flames of love. [*Exit.*]

Enter KING and ANTIGONUS.

KING.

Kings of their envy cheat a foolish world;
Fate gives us all in spite, that we alone
Might have the pain of knowing all is nothing;
The seeming means of bliss but heighten woe,
When impotent, to make their promise good:
Hence, kings, at least, bid fairest to be wretched.

ANTIGONUS.

True, Sir; 'tis empty, or tormenting, all:
The days of life are sisters; all alike;
None just the same; which serves to fool us on
Thro' blasted hopes, with change of fallacy;
While joy is, like to-morrow, still to come;
Nor ends the fruitless chace but in the grave.

KING.

212 THE BROTHERS.

KING.

Ay, there, *Antigonus*, this pain will cease,
Which meets me at the banquet; haunts my pillow;
Nor, by the din of arms, is frighted from me.
Conscience, what art thou? Thou tremendous power!
Who dost inhabit us without our leave;
And art, within ourselves, another self;
A master self, that loves to domineer,
And treat the monarch frankly as the slave.
How dost thou light a torch to distant deeds?
Make the past, present; and the future, frown?
How, ever and anon, awake the soul,
As with a peal of thunder, to strange horrors,
In this long restless dream, which idiots hug,
Nay, wise men flatter with the name of life?

ANTIGONUS.

You think too much.

KING.

I do not think at all:

The gods impose, the gods inflict, my thoughts;
And paint my dreams with images of dread.
Last night, in sleep, I saw the *Thracian* queen,
And her two murder'd sons. She frown'd upon me,
And pointed at their wounds. How throb'd my heart?
How shook my couch? And, when the morning came,
The formidable picture still subsisted,
And slowly vanish'd from my waking eye.
I fear some heavy vengeance hangs in air,
And conscious deities infuse these thoughts,
To warn my soul of her approaching doom.
The gods are rigid when they weigh such deeds
As speak a ruthless heart; they measure blood

By

By drops, and bate not one in the repay.
 Could infants hurt me? 'Twas not like a king.

ANTIGONUS.

My lord, I do confess the gods are with us;
 Stand at our side in ev'ry act of life;
 And on our pillow watch each secret thought;
 Nay, see it in its embryo, yet unborn
 But their wrath ceases on remorse for guilt;
 And well I know your sorrows touch your sons;
 Nor is it possible but time must quench
 Their flaming spirits in a father's tears.

KING.

Vain comfort! I this moment overheard
 My jarring sons with fury shake my walls.
 Ah! why my curse from those, that ought to bless me?
 The queen of *Thrace* can answer that sad question:
 She had two sons; but two: And so have I.
 Misfortune stands with her bow ever bent
 Over the world; and he who wounds another,
 Directs the goddess by that part he wounds,
 Where to strike deep her arrows in himself.

ANTIGONUS.

I own, I think it time your sons receive
 A father's awful counsel; or, while here,
 Now weary nature calls for kind repose,
 Your curtains will be shaken with their broils;
 And, when you die, sons blood may stain your tomb.
 But other cares demand you now: The *Romans*.

KING.

O change of pain! The *Romans*? Perish *Rome*!
 Thrice happy they, who sleep in humble life,
 Beneath the storm ambition blows. 'Tis meet

214 THE BROTHERS.

The Great should have the same of happiness,
The consolation of a little envy ;
'Tis all their pay for those superior cares,
Those pangs of heart, their vassals ne'er can feel.
Where are these strangers ? First I'll hear their tale ;
Then talk in private with my sons.

ANTIGONUS.

But how
Intends my lord to make his peace with *Rome* ?

KING.

Rome calls me fiery : Let her find me so !

ANTIGONUS.

O Sir, forbear ! Too late you felt *Rome's* power.

KING.

Yes, and that reason stings me more than ever,
To curse, and hate, and hazard all against her.

ANTIGONUS.

Hate her too much to give her battle now ;
Nor to your godlike valour owe your ruin.
Greece, Thessaly, Illyrium, Rome has seiz'd ;
Your treasures wasted, and your phalanx thinn'd :
Should she proceed, and strike at *Macedon*,
What would be left of empire ?

KING.

Philip : All.

I'll take my throne. Send in these foreigners.

SCENE draws, and discovers a magnificent throne,
PERSEUS, DEMETRIUS, courtiers, &c. attending.
POSTHUMIUS and CURTIUS, the Roman ambassadors,
enter. Trumpets sound. The KING ascends the throne.

POSTHUMIUS.

Philip of *Macedon* ; To those complaints
Our friends groan out, and you have heard at large,

Rome

Rome now expects an answer. She sits judge,
And will have right on earth.

KING.

Expects an answer!

I so shall answer, as becomes a king.

POSTHUMIUS.

Or more, Sir; as becomes a friend of *Rome*.

KING.

Or *Alexander's* heir, to rise still higher.

But to the purpose. Thus a king to those

That would make kings, and puff them out at pleasure.

Has *Philip* done amiss? 'Twas you provok'd him.

My cities, which deserted in my wars,

I thought it meet to punish: You deny'd me.

When I had shook the walls of *Marena*,

You pluckt me thence, and took the taken town:

Then you sent word I should retire from *Greece*,

A conquest at my door, by nature mine;

And said, Here end thy realm; as ye were gods!

And gods ye shall be, ere *Rome* humbles me.

All this is done; yet *Philip* is your friend!

If this buys friendship, where can you find foes?

In what regard will stern *Rome* look upon me?

If as a friend, too precious let her hold

Her own esteem, to cast a stain on mine;

If as an enemy, let her proceed,

And do as she has done; she need no more.

POSTHUMIUS.

The *Romans* do no wrong; yet still are men:

And if to-day an error thwarts their purpose,

To-morrow sets it right: If *Philip* loves

Dominion, and the pride that waits on kings,

(Of

216 THE BROTHERS.

(Of which, perhaps, his words too strongly favour)
Humility to *Rome* will lead him to it:
She can give more than common kings can govern.

KING.

Than *common* kings? Ambassador! remember
Cannæ—Where first my sword was flusht with blood.

DEMETRIUS. [*Aside, to the king.*]

My lord, forbear.

KING.

And *Hannibal* still lives.

POSTHUMIUS.

Because he fled, at *Capua*.

KING.

There, indeed,

I was not with him.

POSTHUMIUS.

Therefore he fled *alone*—

Since thus you treat us,—hear another charge.
Why here detain you, prisoner of your power,
His daughter, who was once *Rome's* good ally,
The king of *Thrace*? Why is she not restor'd?
For our next meeting you'll provide an answer.
What now has pass'd, for *his* sake we forgive.

[*Pointing to Demetrius.*]

But mark this well: There lies some little distance,
Philip, between a *Roman* and a king. [*Exeunt Romans.*]

KING.

How say'st, unsceptred boaster! This to me!

With *Hannibal* I cleft yon *Alpine* rocks;

With *Hannibal* choak'd *Thrasymene* with slaughter:

But, O the night of *Cannæ's* raging field!

When half the *Roman* senate lay in blood

Without

Without our tent, and groan'd, as we carous'd!
 Immortal gods! for such another hour!
 Then throw my carcase to the dogs of *Rome*.

ANTIGONUS.

Sir, you forget your sons.

KING.

Let all withdraw.

[Exeunt all but the King and his sons.]

Two passions only take up all my soul;
 Hatred to *Rome*, and tenderness for them.

Draw near, my sons, and listen to my age.

By what has pass'd, you see the state of things:

Foreign alliance must a king secure;

And insolence sustain to serve his power:

And if alliances with *Rome* are needful,

Much more among ourselves. If I must bear,

Unmov'd, an insult from a stranger's brow,

Shall not a brother bear a brother's look

Without impatience? Whither all this tends,

I'm sorry that your conscious hearts can tell you:

Is it not most severe? Two sons alone

Have crown'd my bed; and they two are not brothers.

Look here, and, from my kind regards to you,

Copy such looks as you should bear each other.

Why do I sigh? Do you not know, my sons?

And if you do—O let me sigh no more!

Let these white hairs put in a claim to peace!

PERSEUS.

Henceforth, my sole contention with my brother

Is this; which best obeys our father's will.

DEMETRIUS.

Father, if simple nature ever speaks

THE BROTHERS.

In her own language, scorning useless words,
You see her now; she swells into my eyes.
I take thee to my heart; I fold thee in it.

[Embracing Perseus,

Our father bids; and that we drank one milk,
Is now the smallest motive of my love.

KING.

Antigonus, the joy their mother felt
When they were born, was faint to what I feel.

DEMETRIUS.

See, brother, if he does not weep! His love
Runs o'er in venerable tears. I'm rude;
But nature will prevail—My king! My father!

[Embracing.

PERSEUS. [*Afide.*]

Now cannot I let fall a single tear.

KING.

See! the good man has caught it too,

ANTIGONUS.

Such tears,

And such alone, be shed in *Macedonia*!

KING.

Be not thou, *Perseus*, jealous of thy brother;
Nor thou, *Demetrius*, prone to give him cause;
Nor either think of empire till I'm dead.
You need not; you reign now; my heart is yours.
Sheath your resentments in your father's peace;
Come to my bosom both, and swear it there.

[Embracing his sons.

ANTIGONUS.

Look down, ye gods, and change me, if you can,
This sight for one more lovely. What so sweet,
So beautiful, on earth, and, ah! so rare,

As

As kindred love, and family repose!
This, this alliance, *Rome*, will quite undo thee.
See this, proud Eastern monarchs! and look pale!
Armies are routed, realms o'er-run by this.

KING.
Or if leagu'd worlds superior forces bring,
I'd rather die a Father, than a King.

Fathers alone, a Father's heart can know;
What secret tides of ill enjoyment flow,
When brothers love! But if their hate succeeds,
They wage the war; but 'tis the *Father* bleeds.

{*Exeunt.*

End of the FIRST ACT.



A C T II.

Enter PERSEUS.

PERSEUS.

WHY loiters my ambassador to *Dymas*?
His greatness will not sure presume to scorn
A friendship offer'd from an heir of empire.
But *Pericles* returns.

[*Enter Pericles.*

Is *Dymas* ours?

PERICLES.

He's cautious, Sir; he's subtle; he's a courtier:
Dymas is now for you, now for your brother;
For both, and neither: He's a summer-insect,
And loves the sunshine: On his gilded wings,
While the scales waver, he'll fly doubtful round you;

220 THE BROTHERS.

And sing his flatteries to both alike :
The scales once fix'd, he'll settle on the winner,
And swear his pray'rs drew down the victory—
But what success had you, Sir, with your brother ?

PERSEUS.

All, all my hopes are at the point of death !
The boy triumphant keeps his hold in love :
He's ever warbling nonsense in her ear,
With all th' intoxication of success.
Darkness incloses me ; nor see I light
From any quarter dawn, but from his death.

PERICLES.

Why start at *his* death, who resolves on *yours* ?

PERSEUS.

Resolves on mine !

PERICLES.

Have you not mark'd the princefs ?

You have : With what a beam of majesty
Her eye strikes sacred awe ! It speaks her mind
Exalted, as it is ? Whom loves she then ?
Demetrius ? no ; *Rome's* darling ; who, no doubt,
Dares court her with your empire. And shall *Perseus*
Survive that loss ?—Thus he resolves your death.

PERSEUS.

Most true. What crime then to strike first ? But how ?
Or when ? or where ? O *Pericles* ! assist me.

PERICLES.

'Tis dangerous.

PERSEUS.

The fitter then for me.

PERICLES.

Wait an occasion that befriends your wishes.

PER-

A TRAGEDY.

221

PERSEUS.

Go, fool, and teach a cataract to creep!
Can thirst of empire, vengeance, beauty, wait?

PERICLES.

In the mean time, accept a stratagem
That must secure your empire, or your love.
Your brother's *Roman* friendships gall no less
The king, than you: He dreads their consequence.
Dymas hates *Rome*; and *Dymas* has a daughter.
How can the king so powerfully fix
Demetrius' faith, as by his marriage there?
For *Dymas*, thus (*Rome*'s sworn, eternal foe)
Becomes a spy upon his private life,
And surety for his conduct.

PERSEUS.

True——But thus

Our art defeats itself. My brother gains
The favourite, and so strengthens in his treason.

PERICLES.

Think you, he'll wed her? No; the princess' eye
Makes no such short-liv'd conquest. He'll refuse,
And thus effect what I have strove in vain:
Yes, he'll refuse; and *Dymas*, in his wrath,
Will lift for us, and vengeance——Then the king
Will, doubtless, much resent his son's refusal;
And thus we kindle the whole court against him.

PERSEUS.

My precious friend, I thank thee. I take wing
On ardent hope: I think it cannot fail.
Go, make thy court to *Dymas* with this scheme:
Begone——*Erixene*?—I'll feed her pride [*Looking out*.
Once more; but not expend my breath in vain.

222 THE BROTHERS.

This meeting stamps unalterable fate ;
I will wed her, or vengeance.

[Enter Erixene and Delia]
O Erixene !

O princess ! colder than your *Thracian* snows !
See *Perseus*, who ne'er stoop'd but to the gods,
Prostrate before you. Fame and Empire sue.
Why have I conquer'd ?—Because you are fair.
What's Empire ?—but a title to adore you.
Why do I number in my lineage high
Heroes and gods ?—That you, scarce less divine,
Without a blush may listen to my vows.
My ancestor subdu'd the world, I dare
Beyond his pride, and grasp at more, in you,
Obdurate maid ! or turn, or I expire.

ERIXENE.

If love, my lord, is choice, who loves in vain
Should blame himself alone ; and if 'tis fate,
'Tis fate in all : Why then your blame on me ?
My crown's precarious, thro' the chance of war ;
But sure my heart's my own. Each villager
Is queen of her affections, and can vent
Her arbitrary sighs where'er she pleases.
Shall then the daughter of a race of kings—

PERSEUS.

Madam, you justly blame the chance of war ;
The gods have been unkind : I am not so.
No ! *Perseus* comes to counter-balance fate ;
Thrace ne'er was conquer'd,—if you smile on me.—
Silent ! obdurate still, as cold as death !
But 'tis *Demetrius*—

ERIX-

A TRAGEDY. 223

ERIXENE.

Prince, I take your meaning.

But, if you truly think his worth prevails,
How strange is your request !

PERSEUS.

No, Madam, no ;
Tho' Love has hurt my mind, I still can judge
What springs the passions of the Great controul.
Ambition is first minister of state ;
Love's but a second in the cabinet ;
Nor can he feather there his unfledg'd shaft
But from ambition's wing : But you conceive
More sanguine hopes, from him whom *Rome* supports,
Than me. You view *Demetrius* on my throne ;
And thence he shines indeed. His charms from thence
Transpierce your soul, enamour'd of *dominion*.

ERIXENE.

Why now you shew me your profound esteem !
Demetrius' guilt alone has charms for me ;
'Tis not the prince, but traitor, wins my love.—
Such insults are not brook'd by royal minds,
Howe'er their fortunes ebb ; and tho' I mourn,
An orphan, and a captive, gods there are—
Fear then an orphan's and a captive's wrong.

PERSEUS.

Your cruel treatment of my passion—
But I'll not talk.—This, Madam, only this—
Think not the cause, the curdled cause of all,
Shall laugh secure, and triumph in my pang—
No ; by the torments of an heart on fire,
She gluts my vengeance, who defrauds my love !

ERIXENE.

What have I done? In what a whirlwind rage
Has snatch'd him hence on ill? I frown on *Perseus*,
And kill *Demetrius*.

DELIA.

Madam, see! the prince.

Enter DEMETRIUS.

ERIXENE.

Ah, prince! the tempest, which so long has lour'd,
Is now full ripe, and bursting o'er your head.
This moment *Perseus*' malice flam'd before me;
Victorious rage broke thro' his wonted guard,
And menac'd loud your ruin. Fly! O fly
This instant.

DEMETRIUS.

To what refuge?

ERIXENE.

Rome extends

Her longing arms to clasp you for her own.

DEMETRIUS.

Madam, 'tis prudent; I confess it is:
But is it loving as true lovers ought,
To be so very prudent in our love?
I boast not so much wisdom: I prefer
Death at your feet, before the world without you.

ERIXENE.

In danger thus extreme——

DEMETRIUS.

Oh! most lov'd!

Lov'd you like me, like me would you discern,
That I but execute my brother's purpose
By such a flight. At that his clamour, rage,

And

And menace aim, to chase a rival hence,
And keep the field alone. Oh! shall I leave him
To gaze whole days; to learn to read your eye;
To study your delights; to chide the wind's
Too rude approach; to bid the ground be smooth;
To follow, like your shadow, where you go;
Tread in your steps; perhaps—to touch your hand.
O death! to minister in little things;
From half a glance to prophecy your will,
And do it, ere well form'd in your own mind?
Gods! gods! while worlds divide me from my princess,
That, should she call, *Demetrius* might grow old,
Ere he could reach her feet.

ERIXENE.

If *Perseus*' love
Pains you, it pains me more. Is your heart griev'd?
Mine is tormented: But since *Philip*'s self
Is love's great advocate, a flat refusal
But blows their rage, and hastens your destruction.
Had I not *that* to fear! were you secure?
I'd ease my bosom of it's full disdain,
And dash this bold presumer on his birth.
But, see! the grand procession.

DEMETRIUS.

We must join it.

Enter the KING, PERSEUS, ROMANS, ANTIGONUS, &c.

KING.

Let the procession halt! and here be paid,
Before yon flaming altar, thanks to heav'n,
That brings us safe to this auspicious day!
The great Lustration of our martial powers,
Which, from its distant birth to present time,

516 THE BROTHERS.

Unfolds the glories of this ancient empire,
And throngs the pride of ages in an hour.

POSTHUMIUS. [Pointing.] KING.

What figure's that, O *Philip*! which precedes
The soul with joy! The posture full is dark.

The founder of our Empire, furious son
Of great *Alcides*. We're ally'd to heaven;
And you, I think, call *Romulus* a god:—
That, *Philip*, second of our name; and *here*
O bend with awe to him, whose red right hand
Hurl'd proud *Darius* like a star from heaven;
With lesser lights around him, flaming down,
And bid the laurell'd sons of *Macedonia*
Drink their own *Ganges*.

PERSEUS. [Aside to Demetrius.] When men

Give him his helmet, brother.

KING. [To his sons.] At every little birth

You lead the troops that join in mock encounter;
And in no other may you ever meet!
But march one way, and drive the world before you.
The victor, as our ancient rites decree,
Must hold a feast, and triumph in the bowl.

DEMETRIUS.

I long, my lord, to see the charge begin;
The brandish'd faulchion, and the clashing helm,
Tho' but in sport; it is a sport for men.
Raw *Alexander* thus began his fame,
And overthrew *Darius*, first, at home.
We'll practise o'er the plans of future conquests,
While neighbouring nations tremble at our play;
And own the fault in fortune, not in us,
That we but want a foe, to be immortal.

PERSEUS. You have supply'd my wants : I thank you, brother.

KING. [*Rising, and coming forwards. Music.*]

How vain all outward effort to supply,
The soul with joy ! The noontide sun is dark,
And music discord, when the heart is low :
Avert its omen ! What a damp hangs on me !
These sprightly, thneful airs but skim along
The surface of my soul, not enter there :
She does not dance to this inchanting sound,
How, like a broken instrument, beneath
The skilful touch, my joyless heart lies dead !
Nor answers to the master's hand divine !

ANTIGONUS.
When men once reach their autumn, sickly joys
Fall off apace, as yellow leaves from trees,
At ev'ry little breath misfortune blows ;
Till, left quite naked of their happiness,
In the chill blasts of winter they expire.
This is the common lot. Have comfort then ;
Your grief will damp the triumph.

KING. It is over.

Hear too ; the trumpet calls us to the field,
And now this phantom of a fight begins.
Fair princess, you and I will go together,
As Priam and bright Helen did of old,
To view the war. Your eyes will make them bolder,
And raise the price of victory itself.

[*All go out but Perseus, who has observed Demetrius and Erixene all this time conversing, and says, be- hind thoughtful and disturb'd.*]

228 THE BROTHERS.

PERSEUS.

Before my face she feeds him with her smiles ;
The king looks on, nor disapproves the crime ;
And the boy takes them as not due to me.
Without remorse as happy as she'll make him
Perish all three ! I'll seek allies elsewhere ;
Father and brother, nay, a mistress too.
Destruction, rise ! Though thou art black as *night*—
Thy mother, and as hideous as *despair* ;
I'll clasp thee thus, nor think of woman more.
How the boy doats, and drinks in at his eyes
Her poison ! O to stab him in her arms !
And yet do less than they have done to me.

Enter PERICLES.

PERICLES.

Where is my prince ? The nation's on the wing ;
No bosom but exults ; no hand but bears
A garland, or a trophy : And shall *Perseus*—

PERSEUS.

Vengeance !

[*Shout within.*]

PERICLES.

Hear how with shouts they rend the skies !

PERSEUS.

Give me my vengeance !

PERICLES.

Forty thousand men,
In polish'd armour, shine against the sun.

PERSEUS.

Dare but another word, and not of vengeance,
And I will use thee, as I wou'd—my brother.

PERI-

PERICLES.

Vengeance on whom?

PERSEUS.

On him.

PERICLES.

What vengeance?

PERSEUS.

Blood.

PERICLES.

'Tis yours.

PERSEUS.

What god will give it me?

PERICLES.

Your own right-hand.

PERSEUS.

I dare not—for my father.

PERICLES.

You shall dare.

PERSEUS.

Shalt thou dare give encouragement to *Perseus*?

Unfold thy purpose; I'll outshoot the mark.

PERICLES.

Where are you going?

PERSEUS.

To the mock encounter.

PERICLES.

What more like mock encounter than the *true*?

PERSEUS.

Enough—He's dead! 'Twas accident; 'twas error!

No matter what. Ten thousand share the blame.

PERICLES.

Hold, Sir! I had forgot: On this occasion,

The troops are search'd; and foils alone are worn,

Instead of swords.

PER-

PERSEUS.

An offer were enough
Who pains my heart, plants thunder in my hand.

PERICLES.
But should this fail—

PERSEUS.

Impossible!

PERICLES.

But, should it,

The banquet follows.

PERSEUS.

Poison in his wine.

I thank the gods! my spirits are reviv'd!

I draw immortal vigour from that bowl!

PERICLES.

Nay, should both fail, the field and banquet too,

All fails not; fairer hopes to fair succeed:

For know, my lord, the king receiv'd with joy

The marriage-scheme, and sent for *Dymas'* daughter.

PERSEUS.

Then there's a second bowl of poison for him.

PERICLES.

Yet more: This ev'ning those ambassadors,

Which *Philip* sent to *Rome*, beneath the name

Of public business, but, in truth, to learn

Your brother's conduct, are expected home.

PERSEUS.

Those whom I swore, before they parted hence,

In dreadful sacraments of wine and blood,

To bring back such reports, as shou'd destroy him:—

And what if, to complete our secret plan,

We feign a letter to his friend the consul,

To strengthen our ambassadors report?

PERI-

PERICLES.

That care, my lord, be mine : I know a knave,
Grown fat on forgery ; he'll counterfeit your name
Old *Quintius*' hand and seal, by former letters
Sent to the king ; which you can gain with ease.

PERSEUS.

Observe—This morning, at their interview,
The *Romans*, in effect, inform'd the king,
That *Thrace* was theirs, and order'd him restore
The princess. This will give much air of truth,
If our forg'd letters say the *Romans* crown
Demetrius king of *Thrace*, and promise more.

PERICLES.

My lord, it shall be done.

PERSEUS.

All cannot fail. [Trumpets.

PERICLES.

The trumpets sound ; the troops are mounted.

PERSEUS.

Vengeance!

Sweet vengeance calls : Nor ever call'd a god
Such swift obedience : Like the rapid wheel,
I kindle in the course ; I'm there already ;
Snatch the bright weapon ; bound into my seat ;
Strike ; triumph ; see him gasping on the ground,
And life, love, empire, springing from his wound.
When godlike ends, by means unjust, succeed,
The great result adorns the daring deed,
Virtue's a shackle, under fair disguise,
To fetter fools, while we bear off the prize. [Exeunt.

End of the SECOND ACT.

ACT



A C T III.

Enter PERSEUS.

PERSEUS.

COWARDS in ill, like cowards in the field,
Are sure to be defeated. To strike home,
In both, is prudence: Guilt, begun, must fly
To guilt consummate, to be safe.

Enter PERICLES.

PERICLES.

My lord—

PERSEUS.

Disturb not my devotions; they decline
The beaten track, the common path of pray'r—
Ye pow'rs of darkness! that rejoice in ill;
All sworn by *Stryx*, with pestilential blasts
To wither every virtue in the bud;
To keep the door of dark conspiracy,
And snuff the grateful fumes of human blood!
From sulphur blue, or your red beds of fire,
Or your black ebon thrones, auspicious rise;
And, bursting thro' the barriers of this world,
Stand in dread contrast to the golden sun;
Fright daylight hence with your infernal smiles,
And howl aloud your formidable joy,
While I transport you with the fair record
Of what your faithful minister has done,

Beyond

Beyond your inspiration, self-impell'd,
To spread your empire, and secure his own.
Hear, and applaud.—Now, *Pericles*! proceed:
Speak; is the letter forg'd?

PERICLES.

This moment; and might cheat
The cunning eye of jealousy itself.

PERSEUS.

'Tis well: Art thou appris'd of what hath past
Since last we parted?

PERICLES.

No, my lord.

PERSEUS.

Then rouse

Thy whole attention: Here we are in private:
Know then, my *Pericles*, the mock encounter
I turn'd, as taught by thee, to real rage.
But blasted be the cowards which I led!
They trembled at a boy.

PERICLES.

Ha!

PERSEUS.

Mark me well:

The villains fled; but soon my prudence turn'd
To good account that momentary shame.
Thus—I pretend 'twas voluntary flight
To save a brother's blood; accusing him
As author of that conflict I declin'd,
And he pursu'd with ardour and success.

PERICLES.

That's artful. What ensu'd?

PERSEUS.

The banquet follow'd.

Held

234 THE BROTHERS.

Held by the victor, as our rites require :
To which his easy nature, soon appeas'd,
Invited me. I went not ; but sent spies
To learn what pass'd ; which spies, by chance detected,
(Observe me) were ill us'd.

PERICLES.

By whom ? your brother ?

PERSEUS.

No ; by his sons of riot. He soon after,
Not knowing that my servants were abus'd,
Kind, and gay-hearted, came to visit me.
They, who misus'd my spies, for self-defence,
Conceal'd their arms beneath the robes of peace.
Of this inform'd, again my genius serv'd me. —

PERICLES.

You took occasion, from these few in arms,
To charge a murderous assault on all.

PERSEUS.

True, *Pericles* : But mark my whole address :
Against my brother swift I bar my gates ;
Fly to my father ; and, with artful tears,
Accuse *Demetrius* ; first, of turning sports,
And guiltless exercise, to mortal rage ;
Then, of inviting me (still blacker guilt !)
To smiling death in an invenom'd bowl ;
And, last, that, both these failing, mad with rage,
He threw his schemes of baffled art aside,
And with arm'd men avow'dly fought my life.

PERICLES.

Three startling articles, and well concerted,
Following each other in an easy train,
With fair similitude of truth ! But, Sir,
How bore your father ?

PER-

PERSEUS.
Oh! he shook! he fell!
Nor was his fleeting soul recall'd with ease.

PERICLES.
What said he, when recover'd?

PERSEUS.
His resolve
I know not yet; but, see, his minion comes;
And comes perhaps to tell me—But I'll go;
Sustain my part, and echo loud my wrongs.
Nought so like innocence, as perfect guilt.
If he brings aught of moment, you'll inform me.

[As Perseus goes off, he is seiz'd by officers.

Enter DYMAS.

PERICLES.
How fares the king?

DYMAS.
Ev'n as an aged oak

Pusht to and fro, the labour of the storm;
Whose largest branches are struck off by thunder;
Yet still he lives, and on the mountain grows;
Strong in affliction, awful from his wounds;
And more rever'd in ruin, than in glory.

PERICLES.
I hear prince *Perseus* has accus'd his brother.

DYMAS.
True; and the king's commands are now gone forth
To throw them both in chains; for farther thought
Makes *Philip* doubt the truth of *Perseus*' charge.

PERICLES.
What then is his design?

DYMAS.
They both this hour

Per-

236 THE BROTHERS.

Must plead their cause before him : Nay, already,
His nobles, judges, counsellors, are met ;
And public justice wears her sternest form :
A more momentous trial ne'er was known ;
Whether the pleaders you survey as brothers,
Or princes known in arts, or fam'd for arms ;
Whether you ponder, in their awful judge,
The tender parent, or the mighty king.
Greece, Athens hears the cause : The great result
Is life, or death ; is infamy, or fame. [Trumpets.

PERICLES.

What trumpets these ?

DYMAS.

They summon to the court.

[Exeunt.

SCENE *draws, the Court, King, &c.*

Enter DYMAS, and takes his place by the KING.

KING.

Bring forth the prisoners.

Strange trial this ! Here sit I to debate,
Which vital limb to lop, nor that to save,
But render wretched life more wretched still.

What see I, but heav'n's vengeance, in my sons ?
Their guilt a scourge for mine : 'Tis thus heav'n writes
Its awful meaning, plain in human deeds,
And language leaves to man.

Enter PERSEUS and DEMETRIUS in chains, from different sides of the stage ; Perseus follow'd by Pericles, and Demetrius by Antigonus.

DYMAS.

Dread Sir, your sons.

KING.

I have no sons ; and that I ever had,

Is

Is now my heaviest curse : And yet what care,
 What pains, I took to curb their rising rage !
 How often have I rang'd thro' history
 To find examples for their private use ?
 The *Theban* brothers did I set before them—
 What blood ! what desolation ! but in vain !
 For thee, *Demetrius*, did I go to *Rome*,
 And bring thee patterns thence of brothers love ;
 The *Quintii*, and the *Scipio's* : But in vain !
 If I'm a monarch, where is your obedience ?
 If I'm a father, where's your duty to me ?
 If old, your veneration due to years ?
 But I have wept, and you have sworn, in vain !
 I had your ear, and enmity your heart.
 How was this morning's counsel thrown away !
 How happy is your mother in the grave !
 She, when she bore you, suffer'd less : Her pangs,
 Her pungent pangs, throb thro' the father's heart.

DEMETRIUS.

You can't condemn me, Sir, to worse than this.

KING.

Than what, thou young deceiver ? While I live,

You both with impious wishes grasp my sceptre :

Nothing is sacred, nothing dear, but Empire ;

Brother, nor father, can you bear ; fierce lust

Of Empire burns, extinguisht all beside.

Why pant you for it ? To give others awe ?

Be therefore aw'd yourselves, and tremble at it,

While in a father's hand.

DYMAS.

My lord, your warmth

Defers the business.

KING.

238 THE BROTHERS.

KING.

Am I then too warm?
 They that should shelter me from every blast,
 To be themselves the storm! O! how *Rome* triumphs!
 Oh! how they bring this hoary head to shame!
 Conquest and fame, the labour of my life,
 Now turn against me; and call in the world
 To gaze at what was *Philip*, but who now
 Wants ev'n the wretch's privilege—a Wish.
 What can I wish? *Demetrius* may be guiltless.
 What then is *Perseus*? Judgment hangs as yet
 Doubtful o'er them; but I'm condemn'd already;
 For both are mine; and one—is foul as hell.
 Should these two hands wage war, (these hands less dear!)
 What boots it which prevails? In both I bleed.
 But I have done. Speak, *Perseus*, and at large;
 You'll have no second hearing. Thou forbear.

[To *Demetrius*.]

PERSEUS.

Speak!—'Twas with utmost struggle I forbore.
 These chains were scarce design'd to reach my tongue:
 Their trespass is sufficient, stopping here.

[Shewing his arms.

These chains! for what? Are chains for innocence?
 Not so; for, see, *Demetrius* wears them too.
 Fool that I was, to tremble at vain laws;
 Nor learn from him defiance of their frown;
 Since innocence and guilt are us'd alike;
 Blood-thirsty stabbers, and their destin'd prey;
Perseus, and He—I will not call him brother:

[Pointing at *Demetrius*,

He wants not that enhancement of his guilt.

KING.

KING.

But closer to the point; and lay before us
Your whole deportment this ill-fated day.

PERSEUS.

Scarce was he cool from that embrace this morning,
Which you injoin'd, and I sincerely gave;
Nor thought he plann'd my death within my arms;
When holding vile, oaths, honour, duty, love,
He fir'd our friendly sports to martial rage.
If war, why not *fair* war? But *that* has danger.
From hostile conflict, as from brothers play,
He blush'd not to invite me to his banquet.

I went not; and in that was I to blame?
Think you, there nothing had been found but peace,
From whence soon after sally'd armed men?
Think you, I nothing had to fear from swords,
When from their *foils* I scarce escap'd with life?
Or poison might *his* valour suit as well:—
This pass'd, as suits his wisdom, *Macedonians*!
Who volts o'er elder brothers to a throne,
With an arm'd rout he came to visit me.
Did I refuse to go, a bidden guest?
And should I welcome him, a threat'ning foe?
Resenting my refusal; boiling for revenge!

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis false.

ANTIGONUS.

Forbear—The king!

PERSEUS.

Had I receiv'd them,
You now had mourn'd my death, not heard my cause.—
Dares he deny he brought an armed throng?

Call

240 THE BROTHERS.

Call those I name; who dare this deed, dare all;
Yet will not dare deny, that this is true.

My death alone can yield a stronger proof;
Will no less proof than *that* content a father?

PERICLES.

Perseus, you see, has art, as well as fire;
Nor have the wars worn *Athen* from his tongue.

PERSEUS.

Let him, who seeks to bathe in brother's blood,
Not find well-pleas'd the fountain whence it flow'd:
Let him, who shudders at a brother's knife,
Find refuge in the bosom of a father:
For where else can I fly? whom else implore?
I have no *Romans*, with their eagles wings,
To shelter me; *Demetrius* borrows those,
To mount full rebel-high: I have their hatred;
And, thanks to heav'n! *deserve* it: Good *Demetrius*
Can see your towns and kingdoms torn away
By these *protectors*; and ne'er lose his temper.
My weakness! I confess, it makes me rave;
It makes me weep—and my tears rarely flow.

PERICLES.

Was ever stronger proof of filial love?

PERSEUS.

Vain are *Rome's* hopes, while you and I survive:
But shou'd the sword take me, and age my father,
(Heav'n grant they *leave* him to the stroke of age!)
The kingdom, and the king, are both their own;
A duteous loyal king, a sceptred slave,
A willing *Macedonian* slave to *Rome*.

KING.

First let an earthquake swallow *Macedonia*.

PERSEUS.

How, at such news, would *Hannibal* rejoice?
 How the great shade of *Alexander* smile?
 The thought quite choaks me up: I can no more.

KING.

Proceed!

PERSEUS.

No, Sir—Why have I spoke at all?
 'Twas needless: *Philip* justifies my charge;
Philip's the single witness which I call,
 To prove *Demetrius* guilty.

KING.

What dost mean?

PERSEUS.

What mean I, Sir! what mean I!—To run mad;
 For who, unshaken both in heart and brain,
 Can recollect it!

KING.

What?

PERSEUS.

This morning's insult.

This morning they proclaim'd him *Philip's* king:
 This morning they forgave you for his sake.
 O pardon, pardon!—I could strike him dead.

KING.

More temper.

PERSEUS.

Not more truth; that cannot be!

And that it cannot, one proof can't escape you;
 For what but truth could make me, Sir, so bold?
Rome puts forth all her strength to crown her minion;
Demetrius's vices, thriving of themselves,
 Her fulsome flatteries dung to ranker growth.

242 THE BROTHERS.

Demetrius is the burden of her song ;
 Each river, hill, and dale, has learnt his name ;
 While elder *Perseus* in a whisper dies.
Demetrius treats ; *Demetrius* gives us peace ;
Demetrius is our god, and *would* be so.—
 My sight is short : Look on him you that can :
 What sage experience sits upon his brow,
 What awful marks of wisdom, who vouchsafes
 To patronize a Father, and a King ?
 Such patronage is treason.

KING.

Treason ! Death !

PERSEUS.

Nor let the ties of blood bind up the hands
 Of justice ; Nature's ties are broke already :
 For, who contend before you ?—Your two sons ?—
 No ; read aright ; 'tis *Macedon*, and *Rome*.
 A well-mask'd foreigner, and your—*only* son,
 Guard of your life, and—*exile* of your love.
 Now, bear me to my dungeon : What so fit
 As darkness, chains, and death, for such a traitor ?

KING.

Speak, *Demetrius*.

ANTIGONUS.

My lord, he cannot speak ; accept his tears—
 Instead of words.

PERSEUS.

His tears as false as they.—

Now, with fine phrase, and foppery of tongue,
 More graceful action, and a smother tone,
 That orator of fable, and fair face,
 Will steal on your brib'd hearts, and, as you listen,
 Plain truth, and I, plain *Perseus*, are forgot. II DE-

DEMETRIUS.

My Father ! King ! and Judge ! thrice awful power !
Your Son, your Subject, and your Prisoner, hear ;
Thrice humble state ! If I have grace of speech,
(Which gives, it seems, offence) be that no crime,
Which oft has serv'd my country, and my king :
Nor in my brother let it pass for virtue,
That, as he is, ungracious he would seem :
For, oh ! he wants not art, tho' grace may fail him.
The wonted aids of those that are accus'd,
Has my accuser seiz'd. He shed false tears,
That my true sorrows might suspected flow :
He seeks *my* life, and calls *me* Murderer ;
And vows no refuge can *he* find on earth,
That *I* may want it in a father's arms ;
Those arms, to which e'en strangers fly for safety.

KING.

Speak to your charge.

DEMETRIUS.

He charges me with treason ;

If I'm a traitor, if I league with *Rome*,
Why did his zeal forbear me till this hour ?
Was treason then no crime, till (as he feigns)
I sought his life ? Dares *Perseus* hold, so much,
His father's welfare cheaper than his own ?
Less cause have I, a brother, to complain.
He says, I wade for Empire thro' his blood :
He says, I place my confidence in *Rome* :
Why murder him, if *Rome* will crown my brow ?
Will then a sceptre, dipt in brother's blood,
Conciliate love, and make my reign secure ?

M 2

False

244 THE BROTHERS.

False are both charges; and he proves them false,
By placing them together.

ANTIGONUS.

That's well urg'd.

DEMETRIUS.

Mark, Sir, how *Perseus*, unawares, absolves me
From guilt in all, by loading all with guilt.
Did I design him poison at my feast?
Why then did I provoke him in the field?
That, as he did, he might refuse to come?
When angry he refus'd, I should have sooth'd
His rous'd resentment, and deferr'd the blow;
Not destin'd him that moment to my sword,
Which I before instructed him to shun.
'Thro' fear of death, did he decline my banquet?
Cou'd I expect admittance then at his?
These numerous pleas at variance, overthrow
Each other, and are advocates for me.

PERSEUS.

No, Sir; *Posthumius* is his advocate.

KING.

Art thou afraid that I should hear him out?

DEMETRIUS.

Quit then this picture, this well-painted fear,
And come to that, which touches him indeed.
Why is *Demetrius* not despis'd of all,
His second in endowments, as in birth?
How dare I draw the thoughts of *Macedon*?
How dare I gain esteem with foreign powers?
Esteem, when gain'd, how dare I to preserve?
These are his secret thoughts; these burn within;
These sting up accusations in his soul;

Turn

Turn friendly visits to foul fraud, and murder ;
 And pour in poison to the bowl of love.
Merit is Treason in a younger brother.

KING.

But clear your conduct with regard to *Rome*!

DEMETRIUS.

Alas ! dread Sir, I grieve to find set down,
 Among my crimes, what ought to be my praise.
 That I went hostage, or ambassador,
 Was *Philip's* high command, not my request :
 Indeed, when there, in both those characters,
 I bore in mind to whom I owe my birth :
Rome's favour follow'd. If it is a crime
 To be regarded, spare a crime you caus'd ;
 Caus'd by your orders, and example too.
 True, I'm *Rome's* friend, while *Rome* is your ally :
 When not, this hostage, this ambassador,
 So dear, stands forth the fiercest of her foes ;
 At your command, flies swift on wings of fire,
 The native thunder of a father's arm.

ANTIGONUS.

There spoke, at once, the Hero, and the Son.

DEMETRIUS.

To close—To thee, I grant, some thanks are due ;

[*Speaking to Perseus*]

Not for thy kindness, but malignity :
 Thy character's my friend, tho' thou my foe :
 For, say, whose temper promises most guilt ?
Perseus, importunate, demands my death :
 I do not ask for his : Ah ! no ; I feel
 Too pow'ful nature pleading for him *here* :
 But, were there no fraternal tie to bind me,

246 THE BROTHERS.

A son of *Philip* must be dear to me.
 If you, my father, had been angry with me,
 An elder brother, a less awful parent,
 He should assuage you, he should intercede,
 Soften my failings, and indulge my youth :
 But my asylum drops its character ;
 I find not there my rescue, but my ruin.

PERSEUS.

His bold assurance——

KING.

Do not interrupt him ;

But let thy brother finish his defence.

DEMETRIUS.

O *Perseus* ! how I tremble as I speak !
 Where is a brother's voice ; a brother's eye ?
 Where is the melting of a brother's heart ?
 Where is our awful father's dread command ?
 Where a dear, dying mother's last request ?
 Forgot, scorn'd, hated, trodden under foot !
 Thy heart, how dead to ev'ry call of nature !
 Unson'd ! unbrother'd ! nay, unhumaniz'd !
 Far from affection, as thou'rt near in blood !
 Oh ! *Perseus, Perseus* !—But my heart's too full.

[Falls on Antigonus.

KING.

Support him.

PERSEUS.

Vengeance overtakes his crimes.

KING.

No more !

ANTIGONUS.

See, from his hoary brow, he wipes the dew,
 Which agony wrings from him.

KING.

KING.

Oh! my friend,
 These boys at strife, like *Ætna's* struggling flames,
 Convulsions cause, and make a mountain shake;
 Shake *Philip's* firmness, and convulse his heart;
 And, with a fiery flood of civil war,
 Threaten to deluge my divided land.
 I've heard them both; by neither am convinc'd:
 And yet *Demetrius's* words went thro' my heart.—
 A double crime, *Demetrius*, is your charge;
 Fondness for *Rome*, and hatred to your brother.
 If you can clear your innocence in one,
 'Twill give us cause to think you wrong'd in both.

DEMETRIUS.

How shall I clear it, Sir?

KING.

This honest man
 Detests the *Romans*: If you wed his daughter,
Rome's foe becomes the guardian of your faith.

DEMETRIUS.

I told you, Sir, when I return'd from *Rome*—

KING.

How!—Dost thou want an absolute command?
 Your Brother, Father, Country, all exact it.

ANTIGONUS. [*Aside to Demetrius.*]

See yonder guards at hand, if you refuse.
 Nay, more; a father, so distress'd, demands
 A son's compassion, to becalm his heart.

Oh! Sir, comply.

DEMETRIUS. [*Aside to Antigonus.*]

There! there! indeed, you touch me!
 Besides, if I'm confin'd, and *Perseus* free,

248 THE BROTHERS.

I never, never, shall behold *her* more.—

Pardon, ye gods! an artifice forc'd on me.

Dread Sir, your son complies. [To the king.

DYMAS.

Astonishment!

KING.

Strike off his chains. Nay, *Perseus* too is free:

They wear no bonds, but those of duty, now.

Dymas, go, thank the prince: He weds your daughter;
And highest honours pay your high desert.

[*Exeunt all but Dymas and Demetrius.*

DYMAS.

O, Sir, without presumption, may I dare
To lift my ravish'd thought?—

DEMETRIUS.

In what I've done,

I paid a duty to my father's will:

And set you an example, where 'tis due,

Of not with-holding yours.

DYMAS.

My duty, Sir,

To you, can never fail.

DEMETRIUS.

Then, *Dymas*, I request thee,

Go seek the king, and save me from a marriage

My brother has contriv'd, in artful malice,

To make me lose my Father, or my Love.

Go, charge the just refusal on thyself.

DYMAS.

What *Philip* authorizes me to wish,

You, Sir, may disappoint: But, to take on me

The load of the refusal—

DEMETRIUS.

Is no more

Than

Than *Dymas* owes his honour, if he'd shun
The natural surmise, that he concurr'd
In brewing this foul treason.

DYMAS.

Sir, the king
Knows what he does ; and, if he seeks my glory—

DEMETRIUS.

In a degree, destructive of his own,
'Tis yours to disappoint him, or renounce
Your duty to your king.

DYMAS.

You'll better tell—

DEMETRIUS.

Yes, better tell the king, he wounds his honour,
By lifting up a *minion* from the dust,
And mating him with princes. Use your power
Against yourself: Yes, use it, like a man,
In serving him who gave it. Thus you'll make
Indulgence, justice, and absolve your master.
Tho' kings delight in raising what they love,
Less owe they to themselves, than to the throne ;
Nor must they prostitute its majesty,
To swell a subject's pride, howe'er deserving.

DYMAS.

What the king grants me—

DEMETRIUS.

Talk not of a grant :

What a king *ought not*, that he *cannot* give ;
And what is more than meet from princes bounty,
Is plunder, not a grant. Think you, his honour
A perquisite belonging to your place,
As favourite *paramount* ? Preserve the king

M 5

From

250 THE BROTHERS.

From doing wrong, tho' wrong is done for *you*;
And shew, 'tis not in favour to corrupt thee.

DYMAS.

I fought not, Sir, this honour.

DEMETRIUS.

But would take it.

True majesty's the very soul of kings;
And, rectitude's the soul of majesty:
If mining minions sap that rectitude,
The king may live, but majesty expires:
And he that lessens majesty, impairs
That just obedience public good requires;
Doubly a traitor, to the Crown, and State.

DYMAS.

Must I refuse what *Philip's* pleas'd to give?

DEMETRIUS.

Can a king give thee more than is his *Own*?
Know, a king's dignity is *public* wealth;
On that subsists the nation's fame, and power.
Shall fawning sycophants, to plump themselves,
Eat up their master, and dethrone his glory?
What are such wretches? What, but vapours foul,
From fens and bogs, by royal beams exhal'd,
That radiance intercepting, which should chear
The land at large? Hence subjects hearts grow cold,
And frozen loyalty forgets to flow:
But, then 'tis slipp'ry standing for the *minion*;
Stains on his ermin, to their royal master
Such miscreants are; not jewels in his crown.
If you persist, Sir—But, of words, no more!
To me, to threat, is harder than to do!

DYMAS.

Let me embrace this genuine son of Empire. When

When warm debates divide the doubtful land,
Should I not know the prince most fit to reign?
I've try'd you, as an eagle tries her young,
And find, your dauntless eye is fix'd on glory.
I'll to the king, and your commands obey.—

We must give young men opiates in a fever. [*Aside.*]

Yes, boy, I will obey thee, to thy ruin.

Erixene shall strike thee dead for this. [*Exit Dymas.*]

DEMETRIUS.

These Statesmen nothing woo, but Gold and Power.

I'm a bold advocate for *other* love;

Tho', at *their* bar, indicted for a fool.

When reason, like the skilful charioteer,

Can break the fiery passions to the bit,

And, spite of their licentious fallies, keep

The radiant track of glory; passions, then,

Are aids and ornaments. Triumphant reason,

Firm in her seat, and swift in her career,

Enjoys their violence, and, smiling, thanks

Their formidable flame, for high renown.

Take then my soul, fair maid! 'tis wholly thine;

And thence I feel an energy divine.

When objects, worthy praise, our hearts approve,

Each virtue grows on consecrated love:

And, sure, soft passion *claims* to be forgiv'n,

When love of beauty is the love of heav'n.

End of the THIRD ACT.



ACT IV.

Enter ERIXENE and DELIA.

ERIXENE.

'TIS plain! 'tis plain! this marriage gains her father:
 He join'd to *Rome*, the crown. Thy words were true:
 He woos the diadem; that diadem which I
 Despis'd for him. O, how unlike our loves!
 But it is well; he gives me my revenge.
 Wed *Dymas'* daughter! What a fall is there?
 Not the world's empire could repair his glory.

DELIA.

Madam, you can't be mov'd too much!—But why
 More now than at the first?

ERIXENE.

At first I doubted:
 For who, that lov'd like me, could have believ'd?
 I disbeliev'd what *Pericles* reported;
 And thought it *Perseus'* art to wound our loves.
 But when the good *Antigonus*, sworn friend
 To false *Demetrius*, when his word confirm'd it,
 Then passion took me, as the northern blast
 An autumn leaf. O gods! the dreadful whirl!
 But, while I speak, he's with her: Laughs and plays;
 Mingles his dalliance with insulting mirth;
 To this new goddess offers up my tears;
 Yes, with my shame and torture, woos her love.

I see;

I see, hear, feel it! O these raging fires!
Can then the thing we scorn give so much pain?

DELIA.

Madam, these transports give him cause to triumph!

ERIXENE.

I vent my grief to thee; *he* ne'er shall know it.
If I can't conquer, I'll conceal my passion;
And stifle all its pangs beneath disdain.

DELIA.

The greatest minds are most relenting too:
If then *Demetrius* should repent his crime——

ERIXENE.

If still my passion burns, it shall burn inward:
On the fierce rack in silence I'll expire,
Before one sigh escape me——*He* repent!
What wild extravagance of thought is thine?
But did he? Who repents, has once been false:
In love, repentance but declares our guilt;
And injur'd honour—shall exact its due.
In vain *his* love, nay, *mine*, should groan in vain!
Both are devoted. Vengeance, vengeance, reigns!
Our first love murder'd, is the sharpest pang
A human heart can feel.

DELIA.

The king approaches.

Enter the KING, &c.

KING.

Madam, at length we see the dawn of peace,
And hope an end of our domestic jars.
The jealous *Perseus* can no longer fear
Demetrius is a Roman; since this day
Makes him the son of *Dymas*, Rome's worst foe.

ERIX.

ERIXENE.

Already, Sir, I've heard, and heard with joy,
Th' important news.

KING.

To make our bliss run o'er,
You, Madam, will complete what heav'n begins;
And save the love-sick *Perseus* from despair:
That marriage would leave *Rome* without pretence
To touch our conquest; and for ever join
To these dominions long-disputed *Thrace*.

Enter DYMAS.

ERIXENE.

Tho' *Thrace* by conquest stoops to *Macedon*,
I know my rank, and would preserve its due.
With meditated coldness have I heard
Prince *Perseus*' vows; unwilling to consent,
Before restor'd to my forefathers throne,
Lest that consent should merit little thanks,
As flowing less from choice, than your command:
But since the *Roman* pride will find account
In my persisting still; and *Philip* suffer;
I quit the lofty thought on which I stood,
And yield to your request.

KING.

Indulgent gods!

Blest moment! How will this with transport fill
The doubtful *Perseus*, after years of pain?

DYMAS.

My lord, I've heard what past, and give you joy
Of *Perseus*' nuptials, which your state requires:
But for *Demetrius*—think of those no more.
Far from accepting such a load of glory,

I bring,

I bring, I bring, my lord, this forfeit head
Due to my bold refusal.

KING.

Dares the boy
Fall from his promise ; and impose on thee
Forc'd disobedience to my royal pleasure ?

DYMAS.

No, my most honour'd lord, there, there's my crime :
Fond of the maid, with ardour he press'd on ;
But should I dare pollute his blood with mine ?
But you, Sir, authorize it—still more base,
To wrong a master so profusely kind.

KING.

That man is noble on whom *Philip* smiles.
Come, come, there's something more in this—explain.

DYMAS.

Why am I forc'd on this ungrateful office ?
Yet can't I tell you more than fame has told ;
Which says *Demetrius* is in league with *Rome*.
Why weds ambition then an humble maid,
But to gain me to treason ? What then follows ?
They'll say the subtle statesman plann'd this marriage,
To raise his blood into his master's throne.
No, Sir, preserve my fame ; let life suffice.

Enter PERICLES.

PERICLES.

Sir, your ambassadors arriv'd from *Rome*—
[Presents a letter:]

KING.

Ha ! I must read it—this will tell me more.

[After reading it,

256 THE BROTHERS.

O princess! now our only comfort flows
From your indulgence to my better son.
This dreadful news precipitates my wish.
To keep rapacious *Rome*, from seizing *Thrace*,
You cannot wed too soon: My fair ally!
What if you bless me, and my son, to-morrow?

ERIXENE.

Since you request, and your affairs demand it,
Without a blush—I think I may comply.

KING.

O daughter! but no more—The gods will thank you!
I go to bless my *Perseus* with the news.

DYMAS.

Thus the boy's dead in Empire, and in Love.

[*Exeunt King, Dymas, &c.*]

ERIXENE.

I triumph! I'm reveng'd! I reign! I reign!
Nor thank *Demetrius'* treason for a crown.
Love is our own cause, honour is the gods.
I can be glorious without happiness;
But without glory never can be blest.——

DELIA.

'Tis well; but can you wed the man you scorn?

ERIXENE.

Wed any thing, for vengeance on the perjurd.
I'll now insult him from an higher sphere:
This unexpected turn may gall his pride.
Whate'er has pangs for him, has charms for me.

DELIA.

A rooted love is scarce so soon remov'd.

ERIXENE.

If not, the greater virtue to controul it;
And strike at his heart, tho' 'tis through my own.

DE-

A TRAGEDY.

257

DELIA.

I can't but praise this triumph ; yet I dread
The combat still. And see, the foe draws near.

Enter DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

Erixene !

ERIXENE.

My Lord !

DEMETRIUS.

My pale cheek speaks,
My trembling limbs prevent my faltering tongue,
And ask you——

ERIXENE.

What, my Lord ?

DEMETRIUS.

My Lord ?——Her eyes

Confirm it true, and yet, without a crime,
I can't believe it. O *Erixene*——

ERIXENE.

I guess your meaning, Sir, but am surpriz'd
That *Dymas'* son should think of aught I do.

DEMETRIUS.

False are my senses ! false both ear and eye !
All, all be rather false than her I love !

ERIXENE.

She past not, Sir, this way.

DEMETRIUS.

Is then my pain

Your sport ? and can *Erixene* pretend
Herself deceiv'd, by what deceiv'd the king ?
An artifice made use of for your sake :
A proof, not violation, of my love.

ERIX-

258 THE BROTHERS.

ERIXENE.

I thought not of your love, nor artifice :
Both were forgot ; or, rather, never known.
But without artifice I tell you this ;
Your brother lays his sceptre at my feet,
And whose example bids my heart resist
The charms of empire ?

DEMETRIUS.

This is woman's skill :

You cease to love, and from my conduct strive
To labour an excuse. For if indeed
You thought me false, had you been thus serene,
Calm, and unruffled ? No ; my heart says, no.
Passions, if great, tho' turn'd to their reverse,
Keep their degree, and are great passions still.
And she who, when she thinks her lover false,
Retains her temper, never lost her heart.

ERIXENE.

That I'm serene, says not I never lov'd.
Indeed the vulgar float as passion drives ;
But noble minds have reason for their queen.
While you deserv'd, my passion was sincere ;
You change, my passion dies. But, pardon, Sir,
If my vain mind thinks anger is too much :
Take my neglect, I can afford no more.

DEMETRIUS.

No, rage ! flame ! thunder ! give a thousand deaths !
Oh ! rescue me from this more dreadful calm !
This curst indifference ! which like a frost
In northern seas, out-does the fiercest storm.
Commanded by my father to comply,
I feign'd obedience :—Had I then refus'd—

ERIX-

ERIXENE.

I grant the consequence had been most dreadful!
 I grant that *Dymas'* daughter had been angry.

DEMETRIUS.

Ask *Dymas* with what rage——

ERIXENE.

You well might rage,
 To be refus'd.

DEMETRIUS.

Refus'd?

ERIXENE.

He told your secret;
 The king, and I, and all the court can witness.

DEMETRIUS.

Refus'd! false villain! O the perjur'd slave!
 Hell-born impostor! Madam, 'tis most false!
 Warm from my heart is every word I speak!
 The villain lies! Believe the pangs that rend me;
 Believe the witness streaming from my eyes,
 And let me speak no more.

ERIXENE.

I do believe
 Your grief sincere. I've heard the maid is fair.

DEMETRIUS.

Proceed; and thus *indeed* commit that crime
 You falsely charge on me. The crown has charm'd you.
 How warm this morning did you press my flight?
 The cause is plain: An out-rag'd lover's groan,
 And dying agony, molest our ear,
 And hurt the music of a nuptial song.

ERIXENE.

Since your *inconstancy* persists to charge
 Its crime on my *ambition*, I'll be kind,

And

260 THE BROTHERS.

And leave you in possession of an error,
Of which you seem so fond.

DEMETRIUS.

Ah! stay one moment!

Enter PERSEUS and PERICLES.

PERSEUS.

Erixene!

DEMETRIUS.

Distraction! [*Starting.*]

ERIXENE.

'Tis well tim'd.

My lord, your brother doubts if I'm sincere,
And thinks (an error natural to him)
I'll break my vow to you.—You'll clear my fame,
And labour to convince him, that to-morrow,
Erixene's at once, a bride, and queen.

[*Exit Erixene.*]

PERSEUS.

When I have work'd him up to violence,
Bring thou the king, and pity my distress.

[*To Pericles, who goes out.*]

DEMETRIUS.

On what Extremes extreme distress impels me?
In things impossible I put my trust;
I, in my only brother, find a foe;
Yet in my rival, hope the greatest friend.
When all our hopes are lodg'd in such expedients,
'Tis as if poison were our only food;
And death was call'd on as the guard of life.

PERSEUS.

Why dost thou droop?

DEME-

DEMETRIUS.

Because I'm dead ; quite dead
To hope ; and yet rebellious to despair ;
Like ghosts unblest'd, that burst the bars of death,
Strange is my conduct ?—Stranger my distress ;
Beyond example both ! Who e'er before me
Press'd his worst foe, to prove his truest friend ?
But tho' thou'rt *not* my Brother, thou'rt a *Man* ;
And, if a man, compassionate the worst
That man can feel ; tho' found that worst in me.

PERSEUS.

What wouldst ?

DEMETRIUS.

Unclinch thy talons from thy prey ;
Let the dove fly to *this* her nest again. [Striking his
For, oh ! the maid's unalienably mine, *breast.*
Tho' now thro' rage run mad, and turn'd to thee.
How often have I languish'd at her feet ?
Bask'd in her eye, and revell'd in her smile ?
How often, as she listen'd to my vows,
Trembling and pale with agonies of joy,
Have I left earth, and mounted to the stars ?

PERSEUS.

There *Dymas'* daughter shone above the rest,
Illustrious in thy sight.

DEMETRIUS.

Thy taunt, how false ?—

I no less press your int'rest than my own.
Think you 'tis possible her heart so long
Inclin'd to me, the price of all my vows,
Purchas'd by tears and groans, and paid me down
In tenderest returns of love divine,
Can in one day be yours ?—Impossible !

262 THE BROTHERS.

PERSEUS.

If I'm deceiv'd, I'm pleas'd with the deceit.
How my heart dances in the golden dream!
In pity do not wake me till to-morrow.

DEMETRIUS.

Then thou'lt awake distracted.—Trust me, brother!
She gives her hand alone.

PERSEUS.

Nor need I more;
That hand's enough that brings a scepter in it.
I scorn the prince who weds with meaner views.
Her duty's mine, and I conceive small pain
From your sweet error, that her love is yours.
I'm pleas'd such cordial thoughts of your own merit
Support you in distress.

DEMETRIUS.

Inhuman Perseus!

If pity dwells within the heart of man,
If due that pity to the last distress,
Pity a lover exquisitely pain'd;
A lover exquisitely pain'd by you.
Oh! in the name of all the gods, relent!
Give me my princess! give her to my throes!
Amidst a thousand *you* may chuse a Love;
The spacious earth contains but one for *me*.——
But oh! I rave: Art thou not he, the man
Who drinks my groans like musick at his ear?
And wou'd as wine, as nectar, drink my blood?
Are all my hopes of mercy lodg'd in thee?
O rigid gods! and shall I then fall down!
Embrace thy feet, and bathe them with my tears?
Yes, I will drown thee with my tears, my blood,

So

So thou afford a human ear to pangs,
A brother's pangs, a brother's broken heart.

PERSEUS.

Pardon, *Demetrius*, but the princess calls,
And I am bound to go.

DEMETRIUS.

O stay. [*Laying hold of him.*]

PERSEUS.

You tremble.

DEMETRIUS.

The princess calls, and you are bound to go ?

PERSEUS.

E'en so.

DEMETRIUS.

What princess.

PERSEUS.

Mine.

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis false.

PERSEUS.

Unhand me.

DEMETRIUS.

What, see, talk, touch, nay taste her ; like a bee
Draw honey from her wounded lip, while I
Am stung to death !

PERSEUS.

The triumph once was your's.

DEMETRIUS.

Rip up my breast, or you shall never stir.

My heart may visit her ! O ! take it with you.

Have I not seen her, where she has not been ?

Have I not clasp'd her shadow ? Trod her steps ?

Transported trod ! as if they led to heaven !

Each

264 THE BROTHERS.

Each morn my life I lighted at her eye,
And, ev'ry evening, as its close, expir'd.—

[*Bursts into tears.*]

PERSEUS.

Fie! thou'rt a *Roman*; can a *Roman* weep?
Sure *Alexander's* helmet can sustain
Far heavier strokes than these. For shame, *Demetrius*,
E'en snatch up the next *Sabin* in thy way,
'Twill do as well.

[*Going.*]

DEMETRIUS.

By heaven you shall not stir.

Long as I live, I stand a world between you,
And keep you distant as the poles asunder.
Who takes my love, in mercy takes my life;
Thy bloody pass cleave thro' thy brother's breast.
I beg, I challenge, I provoke my death. [*His hand up-
on his sword.*]

Enter KING and DYMAS.

PERSEUS.

You will not murder me?

DEMETRIUS.

Yes, you and all.

KING.

How like a tyger foaming o'er his prey!—

PERSEUS.

Now, Sir, believe your eye, believe your ear,
And still believe me perjurd, as this morning.

KING.

Heav'n's wrath's exhausted, there's no more to fear.
My darling son found criminal in all.

DEMETRIUS.

That villain there to blast me! Yes, I'll speak;
For what have I to fear, who feel the worst?

'Tis

'Tis time the truth were known. That villain, Sir,
Has cleft my heart, and laughs to see it bleed;
But his confession shall redeem my fame,
And re-inthroned me in my prince's smile;
Or I'll return that false embrace he gave me,
And stab him in your sight.

KING.

Hold, insolent!

Where's your respect to me?

DEMETRIUS.

O royal Sir!

That has undone me. Thro' respect I gave
A feign'd consent, which his black artifice
Has turn'd to my destruction. I refus'd
That slave's, that cursed slave's, that statesman's daughter,
And he pretends she was refus'd by me.
Hence, hence, this desolation. Nought I fear,
Tho' Nature groan her last. And shall *he* then
Escape and triumph?

KING.

Guards there! seize the prince!

The man you menace you shall learn to fear.

[*He is seiz'd.*]

DYMAS.

Hold, Sir! not this for me! It is your son:
What is my life, tho' pour'd upon your feet?

KING.

Is *this* a son?

DEMETRIUS.

No, Sir; my crime's too great,
Which dares to vindicate a father's honour,
To catch the glories of a falling crown,

266 THE BROTHERS.

And save it from pollution. But I've done.
 I die, unless my princess is restor'd; [*Pointing to Dymas.*
 And if I die, by heav'n and earth, and hell!
 His sordid blood shall mingle with the dust;
 And see if thence 'twill mount into the throne.
 O, Sir! think of it! I'll expect my fate. [*Exit Dem.*

KING.

And thou shalt have it.

DYMAS.

How, my Lord; in tears!

KING.

As if the gods came down in evidence!
 How many sudden rays of proof concur
 To my conviction? Was ever equal boldness?
 But 'tis no wonder from a brother-king;

[*Produces the forg'd letter.*

This king of *Thrace*—To-morrow he'll be king
 Of *Macedon*.—He therefore dies to-night.

PERSEUS. [*Aside, to Dymas.*]

And yet I doubt it; for I know his fondness.
 Thou practise well the lesson I have taught thee,
 While I put on a solemn face of woe,
 Afflicted for a brother's early fall.——

Heaven knows with what regret.——But, Sir, your
 safety— [*Presenting the mandate for Demetrius death.*

KING.

What giv'st thou here?

DYMAS.

Your passport to renown.

You fight your apotheosis in that.

What scales the skies, but zeal for public good?

PERSEUS.

How god-like mercy?

Dy-

DYMAS.

Mercy to mankind,

By treason aw'd.

KING. [*To Perseus.*]

Must then thy brother bleed ?

[*Dymas seeming at a loss, Perseus whispers him,
and gives a letter.*]DYMAS. [*Looking on the letter.*]No, Sir ; the king of *Thrace*.

KING.

Why that is true——

Yet who, if not a father, should forgive ?

DYMAS.

Who, Sir, if not a *Philip*, should be just ?KING. [*To Dymas.*]

Is't not my son ?

DYMAS.

If not, far less his guilt.

KING. [*To Perseus.*]Is't not my other *Perseus* ?

PERSEUS.

Sir, I thank you ;

That seeks your crown, and life.

KING.

And life ?

DYMAS.

No, Sir ;

He'll only take your *crown* ; you still may live.

KING.

Heav'n blast thee for that thought !

PERSEUS.

Why shakes my father ?

KING.

It stabs, it gnaws, it harrows up my soul.

268 THE BROTHERS.

Is he not young? Was he not much indulg'd?
Gall'd by his brother? Doubted by his father?
Tempted by *Rome*? A nation to a boy?

DYMAS.

O a mere infant!—that deposes kings.

KING.

No; once he sav'd my crown.

DYMAS.

And now would wear it.

KING.

How my head swims!

PERSEUS.

Nor strange; the task is hard.

DYMAS.

Yet scarce for him. *Brutus* was but a Roman:

[*Speaking as if he would not have the king hear.*

Yet like a *Philip* dar'd; and is immortal.

KING.

I hear thee, *Dymas*; give me then the mandate.

[*Going to sign, he stops short.*

DYMAS.

No wonder if his mother thus had paus'd.

PERSEUS. [*Aside.*]

Rank cankers on thy tongue; why mention her?

KING.

O gods! I see her now; what am I doing?

[*Throws away the style.*

I see her dying eye let fall a tear

In favour of *Demetrius*.—Shall I stab

Her lovely image stamp'd on every feature?

DYMAS.

His *soul* escap'd it, Sir.

KING.

Thou ly'st; begone.

[*Perseus and Dymas in great confusion: Perseus whis-*
pers Dymas. DY.

DYMAS. [*Aside, to Perseus.*]

True; that, or nought, will touch him.

If, Sir, your mercy——

[*To the king.*]

PERSEUS.

O speak on of mercy;

Mercy, the darling attribute of heav'n.

DYMAS.

If you *should* spare him——

KING.

What if I *should* spare him?

DYMAS.

I dare not say—Your wrath again might rise.

KING.

Yes, if thou'rt silent—What if I *should* spare him?

DYMAS.

Why if you *should*—proud *Rome* would thank you for it.

KING.

Rome!—Her applause more shocks me than his death.

O thou, death's orator! dread advocate

For boweless severity! assist

My trembling hand, as thou hast steel'd my heart;

And if it is guilt in me, share the guilt.

He's dead. [*Signs.*] And if I blot it with one tear,

Perseus, tho' less affected, will forgive me.

PERSEUS.

Forgive! Sir, I applaud, and wish my sorrow

Was mild enough to weep.

[*The King going out, meets Demetrius in mourning, introduced by Antigonus. The King starts back, and drops on Dymas. Recovering, speaks.*]

KING.

This, Fate, is thy tenth-wave, and quite o'erwhelms me.

It less had shock'd me, had I met his ghost.

This is a plot to sentence *me* to death.—

270 THE BROTHERS.

What hast thou done, my mortal foe ! thrown bars

[*To Antigonus.*

Athwart my glory ? but thy scheme shall fail.

As rushing torrents sweep th' obstructing mound,

So *Philip* meets this mountain in his way,

Yet keeps his purpose still.

[*Perseus and Pericles whisper aside.*

PERICLES.

I can't but fear it.

PERSEUS.

I grant the danger great ; yet don't despair :

Jove is against thee, *Perseus* on thy side.

ANTIGONUS.

The prince, dread Sir, low on his bended knee——

KING.

This way, *Antigonus*.—Do'st mark his bloom ?

Grace in his aspect, grandeur in his mein ?

ANTIGONUS.

I do.

KING.

'Tis false ; take a king's word.—He's dead.—

That darling of my soul would stab me sleeping.

How dar'st *thou* start ? Art thou the traitor's father ?

If thou art pale, what is enough for me ?——

How his grave yawns : Oh ! that it was my own.

ANTIGONUS.

Mourn not the guilty.

KING.

No ; he's innocent :

Death pays his debt to justice ; and that done,

I grant him still my son ; as such I love him :

Yes, and will clasp him to my breast, while yet

His clay is warm, nor moulders at my touch.

PER-

A TRAGEDY.

271

PERSEUS. [*Aside.*]

A curse on that embrace.

DYMAS.

Nay worse ; he weeps.

KING.

Poor boy, be not deceiv'd by my compassion ;
My tears are cruel, and I groan thy death.

DEMETRIUS.

And am I then to die ? If death's decreed,
Stab me yourself, nor give me to the knife
Of midnight ruffians, that have forg'd my crimes.
For you I beg, for you I pour my tears ;
You are deceiv'd, dishonour'd ; I am only slain.
Oh ! Father—

KING.

Father ?—There's no father here ;
Forbear to wound me with that tender name ;
Nor raise all nature up in arms against me.

DEMETRIUS.

My Father ! Guardian ! Friend ! nay, Deity !
What less than gods give being, life, and death !
My dying mother—

KING.

Hold thy peace, I charge thee.

DEMETRIUS.

Pressing your hand, and bathing it with tears,
Bequeath'd your tenderness for her, to me ;
And, low on earth, my legacy I claim,
Clasping your knee, tho' banish'd from your breast.

KING.

My knees !—Would that were all ; he grasps my heart.
Perseus, canst thou stand by and see me ruin'd ?

[*Reaching his hand to Perseus.*]

272 THE BROTHERS.

PERSEUS.

Loose, loose thy hold.—It is *my* father too.

KING.

Yes, *Macedon*, and thine, and I'll preserve thee.

DEMETRIUS.

Who once before preserv'd it from the *Thracian*?
And who, at *Thracimene*, turn'd the lifted bolt
From *Philip's* hoary brow?

KING.

I'll hear no more.

O *Perseus*! *Dymas*! *Pericles*! assist me,
Unbind me, disinchant me, break this charm
Of *Nature*, that accomplice with my foes;
Rend me, O rend me, from the friend of *Rome*.

PERSEUS.

Nay *then*, howe'er reluctant, aid I *must*.
The friend of *Rome*?—*That* severs you for ever;
Tho' most incorporate and strongly knit;
As lightning rends the knotted oak asunder.

DEMETRIUS.

In spite of lightning, I renew the tie;
And stubborn is the grasp of dying men.
Who's he that shall divide me from myself?

[*Demetrius is forc'd from the King's knees, on which,
starting up, he flings his arms round his father.*]

Still of a piece with him from whom I grew,
I'll bleed on my asylum, dart my soul
In this embrace, and *thus* my treason crown.

KING.

Who love yourselves, or *Macedon*, or me,
From the curs'd * *Eagle's* talons wrench my crown;

* The Roman ensign.

And

And this barb'd arrow from my breast—'Tis done ;
[Forc'd asunder.

And the blood gushes after it.—I faint.

DYMAS.

Support the king.

PERSEUS.

While treason licks the dust.

[Pointing at Demetrius, fallen in the struggle.

DYMAS.

A field well fought.

PERSEUS.

And justice has prevail'd.

KING.

O that the traitor could conceal the son !

Farewel, once best beloved ! still most deplor'd !

He, he who dooms thee, bleeds upon thy tomb.

[Exit King.

DEMETRIUS.

Prostrate on thee, my mother earth, be thou

Kinder than brother, or than father ; open

And save me in thy bosom from my——*Friends* :

Friends, sworn to wash their hands in guiltless tears,

And quench infernal thirst in kindred blood ;

As if relation sever'd human hearts,

Or that destruction was the child of love.

PERSEUS.

Farewel, young traitor ; if they ask below,

Who sent thee beardless down, say, *Honest Perseus* :

Whom reason sways, not instinct ; who can strike

At horrid parricide, and flagrant treason,

Tho' thro' a bosom dearer than his own.

Think'st thou my tender heart can hate a brother ?

The gods and *Perseus* war with nought but guilt.

274 THE BROTHERS.

But I must go. What, Sir, your last commands
To your *Erixene*? She chides my stay. [*Exit Perseus.*

DEMETRIUS.

Without that token of a brother's love,
He could not part; my death was not enough.——

I came for mercy, and I find it here :——

And death is mercy, since my love is lost.

Alas! my father too; my heart aches for him :

And *Perseus*,—fain would I forgive e'en thee :

But *Philip's* sufferings cry too loud against it.

Blind author, and sure mourner of my death!

Father most dear! what pangs hast thou to come?

Like that poor wretch is thy unhappy doom,

Who, while in sleep his fever'd fancy glows,

Draws his keen sword, and sheaths it in his foes;

But, waking, starts upright, in wild surprize,

To feel warm blood glide round him as he lies;

To see his reeking hands in crimson dy'd,

And a pale corse extended by his side :

He views, with horror, what mad dreams have done,

And sinks, heart-broken, on a murder'd son.

End of the FOURTH ACT.



ACT



ACT V.

SCENE I.

KING, POSTHUMIUS, *meeting.*

POSTHUMIUS.

WE, in behalf of our allies, O King!
 Call'd on thee yesterday, to clear thy glory;
 Nor wonder now that *Philip* is unjust
 To strangers, who has murder'd his own son.

KING.

'Tis false.

POSTHUMIUS.

No thanks to *Philip* that he fled.

KING.

A traitor is no son.

POSTHUMIUS.

Heav'n's vengeance on me,
 If he refus'd not yesterday thy crown,
 Tho' Life and Love both brib'd him to comply.

KING.

See there.

[*Gives the letter.*]

POSTHUMIUS.

'Tis not the consul's hand, or seal.

KING.

You're his accomplices.

POSTHUMIUS.

We're his avengers.

'Tis war.

276 THE BROTHERS.

KING.

Eternal war.

POSTHUMIUS.

Next time we meet—

KING.

Is in the *Capitol*.—Haste, fly my kingdom.

POSTHUMIUS.

No longer *thine*.

KING.

Yes, and proud *Rome* a province.

[*Exit Posthumius, &c.*]

They brave, they make, they tyrannize o'er kings.

The name of king the prostrate world ador'd,

Ere *Romulus* had call'd his *thieves* together.—

But let me pause.—Not *Quintius'* hand, or seal?—

Doubt and impatience, like thick smoke and fire,

Cloud and torment my reason.

ANTIGONUS.

Sir, recall,

And re-examine those you sent to *Rome* :

You took their evidence in haste and anger.

Torture, if they refuse, will tell the truth.

KING.

Go, stop the nuptials, till you hear from me.

[*Exit King and Antigonus.*]

ERIXENE and DELIA meeting.

DELIA.

Madam, the prince, who fled from threaten'd death,

Attempting his escape to foreign realms,

Was lately taken at the city gates,

So strongly guarded by his father's pow'rs;

And now, confin'd, expects his final doom.

ERIXENE.

Imprison'd, and to die!—And let him die.

Bid

Bid *Dymas*' daughter weep.—I half forgot
His perjur'd insolence.—I'll go and glut
My vengeance. O how just a traitor's death!
And blacker still, a traitor to my love.

[*Exeunt Erixene and Delia.*]

Scene draws, and shews Demetrius in prison.

DEMETRIUS.

Thou subterranean sepulchre of peace!
Thou home of horror! hideous nest of crimes!
Guilt's first sad stage in her dark road to hell!
Ye thick-barr'd sunless passages for air,
To keep alive the wretch that longs to die!
Ye low-brow'd arches, thro' whose sullen gloom,
Resound the ceaseless groans of pale despair!
Ye dreadful shambles, cak'd with *human* blood!
Receive a guest, from far, far other scenes,
From pompous courts, from shouting victories,
Carousing festivals, harmonious bow'rs,
And the soft *Chains* of heart-dissolving love.
Oh! how unlike to *these*? heart-breaking load
Of shame eternal, ne'er to be knock'd off,
O welcome death, no, never but by thee.—
Nor has a foe done this.—A friend! A father!—
O that I could have dy'd without their guilt.—

[*Enter Erixene. Demetrius gazing at her.*]

So look'd in chaos the first beam of light:
How drives the strong enchantment of her eye
All horror hence?—How die the thoughts of death?

ERIXENE.

I knew not my own heart. I cannot bear it.

Shame

278 THE BROTHERS.

Shame chides me back ; for to insult his woes
Is too severe ; and to condole, too kind.

[*Going.*

DEMETRIUS.

Thus I arrest you in the name of mercy.
And dare compel your stay : Is then one look,
One word, one moment, a last moment too,
When I stand tottering on the brink of death,
A cruel ignominious death, too much
For one that loves like me ? A length of years
You may devote to my blest rival's arms,
I ask but one short moment. O permit,
Permit the Dying to lay claim to thee,
To thee, thou dear equivalent for life.—
Cruel, relentless, marble-hearted maid !

ERIXENE.

Demetrius, you persist to do me wrong ;
For, know, tho' I behold thee as thou art,
Doubly a traitor, to the State and me ;
Thy sorrow, thy distress have touch'd my bosom ;
I own it is a fault ; I pity thee.

Enter OFFICER.

OFFICER.

My Lord, your time is short, and death waits for you.

ERIXENE.

Death ?—I forgive thee from my inmost soul.

DEMETRIUS.

Forgive me ? Oh ! thou need'st not to forgive ;
If imposition had not struck thee blind.
Truth lies in ambush yet, but will start up,
And seize thy trembling soul, when mine is fled.
O I've a thousand, thousand things to say.

ERIX-

A TRAGEDY. 279

ERIXENE.

And I am come a secret to disclose,
That might awake thee wer't thou dead already.

OFFICER.

My Lord, your final moment is expir'd.

DEMETRIUS and ERIXENE.

One, one short moment more.

DEMETRIUS.

No ; death lets fall
The curtain, and divides our loves for ever.

[Is forc'd out.]

ERIXENE.

Oh I've a darker dungeon in my soul,
Nor want an executioner to kill me.
What revolutions in the human heart
Will pity cause ? What horrid deeds revenge ? *[Exit.]*

Scene shuts. Enter ANTIGONUS, with attendants.

ANTIGONUS.

How distant virtue dwells from mortal man ?
Was't not that each man calls for other's virtue,
Her very name on earth would be forgot,
And leave the tongue, as it has left the heart.
Was ever such a labour'd plan of guilt ?
Take the king's mandate, to the prison fly,
Throw wide the gates, and let *Demetrius* know,
The full detail.

[Enter ERIXENE.]

The princess ! ha ! be gone ; *[To the attendant.]*
While I stir up an equal transport here.
Princess, I see your griefs, and judge the cause :
But I bring news might raise you from the grave ;
Or call you down from heaven to hear with joy.

280 THE BROTHERS.

Just gods! the virtuous will at last prevail.
 On motives here too tedious to relate,
 I begg'd the king, to re-examine those,
 Who came from *Rome*. The king approv'd my counsel.
 Surpriz'd, and conscious, in their charge they falter'd,
 And threaten'd tortures soon discover'd all:
 That *Perseus* brib'd them to their perjuries;
 That *Quintius*' letter was a forgery;
 That prince *Demetrius*' intercourse with *Rome*
 Was innocent of treason to the State.

ERIXENE.

O my swoln heart! What will the gods do with me?

ANTIGONUS.

And to confirm this most surprizing news,
Dymas, who, striving to suppress a tumult,
 The rumour of *Demetrius*' flight had rais'd,
 Was wounded fore, with his last breath confests'd,
 The prince refus'd his daughter; which affront
 Inflam'd the statesman to his prince's ruin.

ERIXENE.

Did he refuse her? [Swoons.

ANTIGONUS.

Quite o'ercome with joy!
 Transported out of life!—The gods restore her!

ERIXENE.

Ah! why recall me? This is a new kind
 Of murder; most severe! that dooms to *life*.

ANTIGONUS.

Fair princess, you confound me.

ERIXENE.

Am I fair?
 Am I a princess? Love and Empire mine?
 Gay, gorgeous visions dancing in my sight!—

No,

No, here I stand a naked shipwreck'd wretch,
Cold, trembling, pale, spent, helpless, hopeless, mad.
Cast on a shore as cruel as the waves,
O'er-hung with rugged rocks, too steep to climb;
The mountain billows loud, come foaming in
Tremendous; and confound, ere they devour.

ANTIGONUS.

Madam, the king absolves you from your vow.

ERIXENE.

For me, it matters not; but oh! the prince——
When he had shot the gulph of his despair;
Emerging into all the light of heav'n,
His heart high beating, with well-grounded hope;
Then to make shipwreck of his happiness,
Like a poor wretch that has escap'd the storm,
And swam to what he deems an happy isle,
When, lo! the savage natives drink his blood.
Ah! why is vengeance sweet to woman's pride,
As rapture to her love? It has undone me.

DELIA.

Madam, he comes.

ERIXENE.

Leave us, *Antigonus*.

ANTIGONUS.

What dreadful secret this?—But I'll obey,
Invoke the gods, and leave the rest to fate. [*Exit Ant.*]

ERIXENE.

How *terribly* triumphant comes the wretch!
He comes, like flowers ambrosial, early born,
To meet the blast, and perish in the storm.

Enter DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

After an age of absence in one hour,

Have

282 THE BROTHERS.

Have I then found thee, thou celestial maid !
 Like a fair *Venus* in a stormy sea ;
 Or a bright goddess, thro' the shades of night,
 Dropt from the stars, to these blest arms agen ?
 How exquisite is pleasure after pain ?
 Why thorns my heart so turbulently strong,
 Pain'd at thy presence, thro' redundant joy,
 Like a poor miser, beggar'd by his store ?

ERIXENE.

Demetrius, joy and sorrow dwell too near.

DEMETRIUS.

Talk not of sorrow, lest the gods resent
 As under-priz'd so loud a call to joy.
 I live, I love, am lov'd, I have her here !
 Rapture in present, and in prospect, more !
 No rival, no destroyer, no despair ;
 For jealousies, for partings, groans, and death,
 A train of joys, the gods alone can name !
 When heav'n descends in blessings so profuse,
 So sudden, so surpassing hope's extreme,
 Like the sun bursting from the midnight gloom,
 'Tis impious to be niggards in delight ;
 Joy becomes duty ; heav'n calls for some excess,
 And transport flames as incense to the skies.

ERIXENE.

Transport how dreadful !

DEMETRIUS.

Turns *Erixene* ?

Can she not bear the sun-shine of our fate ?
 Meridian happiness is pour'd around us ;
 The laughing loves descend in swarms upon us,
 And where we tread is an eternal spring.

By

By heav'n, I almost pity guilty *Perseus*
For such a loss.

ERIXENE.

That stabs me thro' and thro' !

DEMETRIUS.

What stabs thee ?—Speak.—Have I then lost thy love ?

ERIXENE.

To my confusion, be it spoke.—'Tis thine.

DEMETRIUS.

To thy confusion ? Is it then a crime ?

You heard how dying *Dymas* clear'd my fame.

ERIXENE.

I heard, and trembled ; heard, and ran distracted.

DEMETRIUS.

Astonishment !

ERIXENE.

I've nothing else to give thee.

[He steps back in astonishment ; she in agony ; and both are silent for some time.]

He is struck dumb.—Nor can I speak.—Yet must I.

I tremble on the brink ; yet must plunge in——

Know, my *Demetrius* ! joys are for the gods ;

Man's common course of nature is distress :

His joys are prodigies ; and like them too,

Portend approaching ill. The wise man starts,

And trembles at the perils of a bliss.

To hope, how bold ? How daring to be fond ;

When, what our fondness grasps, is not immortal ?—

I will presume on thy known, steady virtue,

And treat thee like a man ; I will *Demetrius* !

Nor longer in my bosom hide a brand,

That burns unseen, and drinks my vital blood.

DEMETRIUS.

What mystery ?

[Here, a second pause in both.]

ERIX-

ERIXENE.

The blackest.

DEMETRIUS.

How every terror doubles in the dark ?

Why muffled up in silence stands my fate ?

'This horrid spectre let me see at once,

And shew if I'm a man,

ERIXENE.

It calls for more.

DEMETRIUS.

It calls for *me* then, Love has made me *more*.

ERIXENE.

O fortify thy soul with more than love ; [thee.
To hear, what heard, thou'lt curse the tongue that tells

DEMETRIUS.

Curse whom ? curse thee !

ERIXENE.

Yes, from thy inmost soul.

Why dost thou lift thine eyes and hands to heav'n ?

The pow'rs most conscious of this deed, reside

In darkness, howl below in raging fires,

Where pangs like mine corrode them.—Thence arise

Black gods of execration and despair !

'Thro' dreadful earthquakes cleave your upward way,

While nature shakes, and vapours blot the sun ;

Then thro' those horrors in loud groans proclaim,

That I am——

DEMETRIUS.

What ?—I'll have it, tho' it blast me.

ERIXENE.

Thus then in thunder,—I am *Perseus'* wife.

[Demetrius falls against the scene. After a pause,

DE.

DEMETRIUS.

In thunder?—No; *that* had not struck so deep.
 What tempest e'er discharg'd so fierce a fire?—
 Calm and deliberate anguish feeds upon me;
 Each thought sent out for help brings in new woe.
 Where shall I turn? where fly? to whom but thee?

[Kneeling.

Tremendous *Jove*! whom mortals will not know
 From blessings, but *compel* to be severe,
 I feel thy vengeance, and adore thy power;
 I see my failings, and absolve thy rage.
 But, Oh! I must perceive the load that's on me;
 I can't but tremble underneath the stroke.
 Aid me to bear!—But since it can't be borne,
 Oh let thy mercy burst in flames upon me!
 Thy triple bolt is healing balm to this;
 This pain unfelt, unfancy'd by the wretch,
 The groaning wretch, that on the wheel expires.

ERIXENE.

Why did I tell thee?

DEMETRIUS.

Why commit a deed
 Too shocking to be told? What fumes of hell
 Flew to thy brain? What fiend the crime inspir'd?

ERIXENE.

Perseus, last night, as soon as thou wast fled,
 At that dead hour, when good men are at rest,
 When every crime and horror is abroad, [scream;
 Graves yawn, fiends yell, wolves howl, and ravens
 Than ravens, wolves, or fiends more fatal far,
 To me he came, and threw him at my feet,

And

286 THE BROTHERS.

And wept, and swore, unless I gave consent
To call a priest that moment, all was ruin'd.
That the next day *Demetrius* and his powers
Might conquer, he lose me, and I my crown,
Conferr'd by *Philip* but on *Perseus'* wife.
I started, trembled, fainted; he invades
My half-recover'd strength, brib'd priests conspire,
All urge my vow, all seize my ravish'd hand,
Invoke the gods, run o'er the hasty rite;
While each ill omen of the sky flew o'er us,
And furies howl'd our nuptial song below.—
Can'st thou forgive?

DEMETRIUS.

By all the flames of love,
And torments of despair, I *never* can.
The furies toss their torches from thy hand,
And all their adders hiss around thy head!
I'll see thy face no more!

[*Going.*]

ERIXENE.

Thy rage is just.
Yet stay and hear me.

[*She kneels and holds him.*]

DEMETRIUS.

I have heard too much.

ERIXENE.

'Till thou hast heard the whole, O do not curse me!

DEMETRIUS.

Where can I find a curse to reach thy crime?

ERIXENE.

Mercy!

[*Weeping.*]

DEMETRIUS.

[*Aside.*]

Her tears, like drops of molten lead,
With torment burn their passage to my heart.
And yet such violation of her vows——

ERIX-

ERIXENE.

Mercy!

DEMETRIUS.

Perseus—

[Stamping.]

ERIXENE.

Stamp till the centre shakes,

So black a Dæmon shalt thou never raise.

Perseus? Can'st thou abhor him more than I?Hell has its furies, *Perseus* has his love,And, oh! *Demetrius* his eternal hate.

DEMETRIUS.

Eternal? Yes, eternal and eternal;

As deep, and everlasting, as my pain.

ERIXENE.

Some god descend and sooth his soul to peace!

DEMETRIUS.

Talk'st *thou* of peace, what peace hast thou bestow'd?

A brain distracted, and a broken heart.

Talk'st *thou* of peace? Hark, hark thy husband calls,

His father's rebel! Brother's murderer!

Nature's abhorrence, and—thy lawful Lord!

Fly, my kind patroness, and in his bosom

Consult my peace.

ERIXENE.

I never shall be there.

My Lord! my Life!

DEMETRIUS.

How say'st? Is *Perseus* here?—

Fly, fly! away, away! 'tis death! 'tis incest!

[Starting wide, and looking round him.]

[As he is going, she lays hold of his robe.]

Dar'st thou to touch *Demetrius*? Dar'st thou touch him

Even with thine eye?

ERIX-

288 THE BROTHERS.

ERIXENE.

I dare—and more, dare seize,
And fix him here: No doubt to thy surprize.—
I'm blemish'd, not abandon'd; honour still
Is sacred in my sight. Thou call'st it incest;
'Tis innocence, 'tis virtue; if there's virtue,
In fix'd, inviolable strength of love.
For, know, the moment the dark deed was done,
The moment madness made me *Perseus'* wife,
I seiz'd *this* friend, and lodg'd him in my bosom,
[*Shewing a dagger.*

Firmly resolv'd I never would be more.
And now I fling me at thy feet, imploring
Thy steadier hand to guide him to my heart.
Who wed in vengeance, wed not but to die.

DEMETRIUS.

Has *Perseus* then an hymeneal claim?
And no divorce, but death?—and death from me,
Who should defend thee from the world in arms?
O thou still excellent! still most belov'd!

ERIXENE.

Life is the foe that parts us; death, a friend
All knots dissolving, joins us; and for ever.
Why so disorder'd? Wherefore shakes thy frame?
Look on me; do I tremble? Am I pale?
When I let loose a sigh, I'll pardon thine.
Take my example, and be bravely wretched;
True grandeur rises from surmounted ills;
The wretched only can be truly great.
If not in kindness, yet in vengeance strike;
'Tis not *Erixene*, 'tis *Perseus'* wife.—
Thou'lt not resign me?

DE-

DEMETRIUS.

Not to *Jove*.

ERIXENE.

Then strike.

DEMETRIUS. [*Gazing on her with astonishment.*]

Now can I strike? Stab at the face of heav'n?

How can I strike?—Yet how can I forbear?

I feel a thousand deaths, debating one.

A deity stands guard on ev'ry charm,

And strikes at me.

ERIXENE.

As will thy brother soon:

He's now in arms, and may be here this hour.

Nothing so cruel as too soft a soul;

This is strange tenderness, that breaks my heart;

Strange tenderness, that dooms to *double* death—

To *Perseus*.

DEMETRIUS.

True.—But *how* to shun that horror?

By wounding thee, whom savage pards would spare?

My heart's inhabitant! my soul's ambition!

By wounding thee, and bathing in thy blood;

That blood illustrious, thro' a radiant race

Of kings, and heroes, rolling down from gods?

ERIXENE.

Heroes and kings, and gods themselves, must yield.

To dire necessity.

DEMETRIUS.

Since that absolves me;

Stand firm and fair.

ERIXENE.

My bosom meets the point,

Than *Perseus* far more welcome to my breast.

290 THE BROTHERS.

DEMETRIUS.
Necessity, for gods themselves too strong,
Is weaker than thy charms. [*Drops the dagger.*]

ERIXENE.
O my Demetrius!

[*Turns, and goes to the farther part of the stage.*]

DEMETRIUS.
O my Erixene! [*Both silent, weep, and tremble.*]

ERIXENE.
Farewel. [*Going.*]

DEMETRIUS. [*Passionately seizing her.*]
Where goest?

ERIXENE.
To seek a friend.

DEMETRIUS.
He's here.

ERIXENE.
Yes Perseus' friend.—
Earth, open and receive me,

DEMETRIUS.
Heav'n strike us dead,
And save me from a double suicide,
And one of tenfold death.—O Jove! O Jove!

[*Falling on his knees.*]
But I'm distracted. [*Suddenly starting up.*]

What can Jove?—Why pray?
What can I pray for?

ERIXENE.
For a heart.

DEMETRIUS.
Yes, one
That cannot feel. Mine bleeds at every vein.

Who

Who never lov'd, ne'er suffer'd ; he feels nothing,
 Who nothing feels but for himself alone ;
 And when we feel for others, reason reels,
 O'erloaded, from her path, and man runs mad.
 As Love alone can exquisitely bless,
 Love only feels the marvellous of pain ;
 Opens new veins of torture in the soul,
 And wakes the nerve where agonies are born :
 E'en *Dymas*, *Perseus* (hearts of adamant !),
 Might weep these torments of their mortal foe.

ERIXENE.

Shall I be less compassionate than they ?

[Takes up the dagger.]

What love deny'd, thine agonies have done ; [Stabs herself.]
Demetrius' sigh outstings the dart of death.

Enter the KING, &c.

KING.

Give me *Demetrius* to my arms ; I call him
 To life from death, to transport from despair.

DEMETRIUS.

See *Perseus*' wife ! [Pointing at Erixene] Let *Delia* tell

KING.

[the rest.]

My grief-accustom'd heart can guess too well.

DEMETRIUS.

That fight turns all to guilt, but tears and death.

KING.

Death !—Who shall quell false *Perseus* now in arms ?

Who pour my tempest on the capital ?

How shall I sweeten life to thy sad spirit ?—

I'll quit my throne this hour, and thou shalt reign.

DEMETRIUS.

You recommend that death you would dissuade ;

292 THE BROTHERS.

Ennobled thus by fame and empire lost,
As well as life!—Small sacrifice to Love.

[*Going to stab himself, the King runs to prevent it;
but too late.*]

KING.

Ah, hold! nor strike thy dagger thro' my heart!

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis my first disobedience, and my last. [*Falls down.*]

KING.

There *Philip* fell! There *Macedon* expir'd!
I see the *Roman* eagle hovering o'er us,
And the shaft broke should bring her to the ground.

[*Pointing at Demetrius.*]

DEMETRIUS.

Hear, good *Antigonus*! my last request:
Tell *Perseus*, if he'll sheath his impious sword
Drawn on his father, I'll forgive him all;
'Tho' poor *Erixene* lies bleeding by:
Her blood cries Vengeance;—but my father's, Peace—
[*Dies.*]

KING.

As much his goodness wounds me, as his death.
What then are both?—O *Philip*, once renown'd!
Where is the pride of *Greece*, the dread of *Rome*,
The theme of *Athens*, the wide world's example,
And the god *Alexander*'s rival, now?
E'en at the foot of fortune's precipice,
Where the slave's sigh wafts pity to the prince,
And his omnipotence cries out for more.

ANTIGONUS.

As the swoln column of ascending smoke,
So solid swells thy grandeur, pigmy man!

KING.

KING.

My life's deep tragedy was plann'd with art,
 From scene to scene advancing in distress,
 Thro' a sad series, to this dire result ;
 As if the *Thracian* queen conducted all,
 And wrote the *moral* in her children's blood ;
 Which seas might labour to wash out in vain.

Hear it, ye nations ! distant ages ! hear ;
 And learn, the dread decrees of *Jove* to fear :
 His dread decrees the strictest balance keep ;
 The father groans, who made a mother weep ;
 But if no terror for *yourselves* can move,
 Tremble, ye parents, for the child ye love ;
 For *Your Demetrius* : *Mine* is doom'd to bleed.
 A guiltless victim, for his father's deed.



A N

AN HISTORICAL
EPILOGUE.

By the AUTHOR.

*AN EPILOGUE, thro' custom, is your right,
But ne'er perhaps was needful till this night :
To-night the virtuous falls, the guilty flies,
Guilt's dreadful close our narrow scene denies.
In history's authentic record read
What ample vengeance gluts Demetrius' shade ;
Vengeance so great, that when his tale is told,
With pity some ev'n Perseus may behold.*

*Perseus surviv'd, indeed, and fill'd the throne,
But ceaseless cares in conquest made him groan :
Nor reign'd he long ; from Rome swift thunder flew,
And headlong from his throne the tyrant threw :
Thrown headlong down, by Rome in triumph led,
For this night's deed his perjur'd bosom bled :
His brother's ghost each moment made him start,
And all his father's anguish rent his heart.*

*When, rob'd in black, his children round him hung,
And their rais'd arms in early sorrow wrung ;
The younger smil'd, unconscious of their woe ;
At which thy tears, O Rome ! began to flow ;*

*So sad the scene : What then must Perseus feel,
 To see Jove's race attend the victor's wheel :
 To see the slaves of his worst foe encrease,
 From such a source !—An emperor's embrace ?
 He sicken'd soon to death ; and, what is worse,
 He well deserv'd, and felt, the coward's curse ;
 Unpity'd, scorn'd, insulted his last hour,
 Far, far from home, and in a vassal's power :
 His pale cheek rested on his shameful chain,
 No friend to mourn, no flatterer to feign ;
 No suit retards, no comfort sooths his doom,
 And not one tear bedews a monarch's tomb.
 Nor ends it thus—dire vengeance to complete,
 His antient empire falling, shares his fate :
 His throne forgot ! His weeping country chain'd !
 And nations ask—Where Alexander reign'd.
 As public woes a prince's crimes pursue,
 So public blessings are his virtue's due.
 Shout, Britains, shout—auspicious fortune bless !
 And cry, Long live—O U R title to success ?*

E N D of V O L. II.



